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Editorial

This issue of *Baptistic Theologies* focuses broadly on the theme of ‘mission’. In addition to the rich content of each article, the variety of interpretative perspectives and the geographical spread of the contributions make for interesting reading.

Toivo Pilli explores the West Coast Revival in Estonia in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. As with his previous contributions to this Journal, Pilli here makes a significant event from ‘Eastern Europe’ known to a wider audience. In this particular case he does not simply narrate the origins and events of this revival; rather he argues that the nature and the impact of the revival led to the emergence of a new ecclesial pattern of congregationalism, a separation from the Lutheran and Orthodox churches, ‘and prepared the cultural-religious context for the emergence of Baptist churches’. While Pilli does not explicitly make the argument, his article certainly begs the question of the necessary inherent relationship between the forms and experiences of mission and the ecclesial structures which both promote and emerge from such.

Melody Maxwell focuses on the history of Baptist missions. She very helpfully offers a broad perspective both in terms of the participants and the nature of such Baptist missions. Indeed, her deliberate use of the word ‘missions’ is not only historically consistent but is suggestive of her concern in this article. In this respect it is worth noting that ‘White male Baptist leaders in England and the United States were not the only ones who participated in this new missionary movement. In addition to Protestants of other denominations, Baptist women, Baptists of African ancestry, and Baptists from a variety of countries all set to work supporting and sending missionaries’. Maxwell’s concern, however, is not only to describe the varied nature of historic Baptist missions but rather she draws upon this tradition to encourage reflection upon and engagement in holistic and creative mission in our own contemporary contexts.

Steve McMullin offers the first of two articles from a Canadian perspective. In his article he documents the way in which the changing cultural context of Canada has necessarily impacted the understanding and nature of mission, not least among Canadian Baptist churches. Accordingly, he highlights the ways in which changes in Western culture mean that mission can no longer be understood simply as that done in foreign countries by appointed ‘missionaries’ who are supported through giving and prayer. Rather, mission requires to be seen as a ‘home’ activity and in some respects the immediate responsibility of every congregation and member. This,

however, is not a straightforward task, given the nature of the impact of this cultural change upon the home situation. Among the issues he touches upon are secularism, pluralism, immigration, and the unattractive nature of 'hierarchical organisation and church bureaucracy, or institutional maintenance'. As a consequence, therefore, he argues that it is not simply that the geographical focus of mission has had to change but also that the approaches to mission have to be examined and reconsidered.

Writing out of the same cultural context, John McNally offers the second article from a Canadian perspective. The focus here is on the connection between a Baptist emphasis on the priesthood of all believers and an attendant commitment to the ministry and mission of local congregations. McNally's argument is that — within the Canadian context — an emphasis on the priesthood of all believers, through emphasising gifting and a mutuality in ministry towards one another, may in fact work against the idea of every member being involved in mission to those beyond the congregation. This argument is supported by reference to denominational statements which can perhaps be summarised as: 'Every member is called to be a minister'. In contrast, McNally seeks to develop an understanding of the priesthood of all believers which includes the idea that every member is gifted and called to mutual and missional ministry. While, as McNally argues, other geographical areas of Baptist life may indicate in their statements a broader understanding of the priesthood of all believers, and while he sees signs of change in the Canadian context, his perspectives on the potentially limiting or enhancing nature of this conviction in a missional context are certainly worth considering.

In the final article, we journey to South America and the theme of integral mission. Daniel Clark charts something of the narrative of the rise and fall of integral mission as an evangelical approach in South America. This is so, even as he demonstrates that its rise was somewhat limited to certain academic and ecclesial contexts and that its fall is associated with political scandal. Writing, therefore, about the current situation, he states: 'The polarisation of South American societies means that advocates of integral mission and their critics inhabit different academic, ecclesial, and missiological networks'. It appears, however, that Clark is not ready to give up completely on a Christologically centred understanding of mission which refuses 'to draw artificial distinctions between proclamation and social action'. This said, he seems uncertain of its future in South America. He offers some steps forward for a more chastened and humbler approach to integral mission, an approach which among other things will be more ideologically inclusive. For those not from a South American context, who advocate integral mission, this is an important and challenging read.

This issue of *Baptistic Theologies* is also the last journal edition in which I will contribute as ‘editor’. IBTSC has a new Director who will now take on that task. In this role, I have read articles I may not necessarily have chosen to read from my own limited areas of interest. I have benefitted greatly from that experience. My thanks go to all the contributors, the Editorial Board, and particularly to Dorothy McMillan and Pieter van Wingerden, who have consistently done much more than I in making sure that IBTSC has been able to regularly produce two academic journals, giving voice to explicitly Baptist concerns with a generous ecumenical spirit.

Revd Dr Stuart Blythe (Editor)

The West Coast Revival in Estonia, 1873-1884: Paving the Way for Baptist Mission

Toivo Pilli

The West Coast Revival in Estonia in the last quarter of the nineteenth century prepared the ground for the emergence of Baptist and Revivalist Free churches (Est. *priikogudused*). Recently, the Revival has been studied from the perspective of cultural anthropology, focusing on the conflict with traditional churches, and paying attention to the emotional – even ecstatic – phenomena. The present article argues that the main contribution of the Revival was the introduction of a new ecclesial pattern – a congregational way of being a church, with emphasis on repentance and spiritual renewal, an ethical lifestyle, and a simple interpretation of the Bible. The awakened moved towards separation from the Lutheran and Orthodox churches. Starting in Coastal Swedish communities in the 1870s, the Revival spread to Estonian-speaking areas. Drawing from the Moravian Brethren spirituality and Swedish neo-pietism, the awakened took responsibility for their spiritual life and initiative in congregational decisions, which increased their self-confidence and sense of identity.

Key Words

West Coast Revival; Estonia; Coastal Swedes (Estonian Swedes); Congregational model; Baptists

Introduction

The so-called West Coast Revival in Estonia, in the 1870s and 1880s, sharply increased religious enthusiasm among Swedish and Estonian-speaking populations in this western region of Tsarist Russia – in Vormsi (Wormsö) and Noarootsi (Nuckö), Hiiumaa Island (Dagö), Ridala (Roethel, Rötel), and surrounding villages. By 1882, revival ideas and practices had spread considerably into the neighbouring parishes.¹ This process introduced the Estonian part of the Baltic region to a new ecclesial paradigm – congregationalism – and prepared the cultural-religious context for the

¹ Jaanus Plaat, *Usuliikumised, kirikud ja vabakogudused Lääne- ja Hiiumaal* [Religious Movements, Churches and Free Churches in West-Estonia and Hiiumaa Island] (Tartu: Eesti Rahva Muuseum, 2001), p. 443.

emergence of Baptist churches. The first Baptist church in Estonia was founded in 1884 in the seaside town of Haapsalu (Hapsal).²

Max Turner points out that a revival encompasses a wider community, it is not merely an individual phenomenon; besides, it lasts over a certain period of time, impacts participants' lives and worship by increased commitment, and engages those not yet involved.³ In this way, revival has a social dimension, including aspects of spirituality and mission. In Estonia, the West Coast Revival led its adherents towards a form of experiential faith and emotional spirituality, as compared to the predominant Lutheran or Orthodox religious practices. In addition, studying the Revival with the lens of cultural anthropology does not give a full picture of the movement. There was a theological facet to it – though simple and lacking sophisticated logic – which, nevertheless, should not be neglected.

Local Prelude to the West Coast Revival

The revival movement along the west coast of Estonia did not emerge from nowhere. It had both local and international links, which shaped its course, sometimes directly, sometimes indirectly. From 1813-1820 an enthusiastic religious movement called 'heaven-goers' (Est. *taevaskäijad*) was characterised by ecstatic phenomena, such as prophecies, apocalyptic visions, trembling, and jumping. The movement was based on Moravian pietism and spread in Western and Northern Estonia, as well as in Viljandi and Pärnu counties.⁴ Though it would probably be impossible to draw a direct line between this earlier revival and the other that emerged sixty years later, there are some striking similarities in popular theology and grassroots level statements in both. For example, appeals for repentance, prophetic utterances, and aspirations for intense religious experiences characterised both 'heaven-goers' and those who were part of the awakening-events on the west coast in the 1870s and 1880s.

Some parallelism can be found also with followers of the Maltsvet-movement which reached its peak of activity in Northern and Central Estonia in 1858-1861. This was a social-religious movement, led by a visionary Juhan Leinberg, or as he became known – Prophet Maltsvet. His followers were sometimes called 'children of the spirit', and they were receptive to

² Richard Kaups, ed., *50 aastat apostlite radadel* [50 Years in the Footsteps of the Apostles] (Keila: E.B.K. Kirjastus, 1934), p. 27.

³ Max Turner, "Revival" in the New Testament?, in Andrew Walker and Kristin Aune, eds., *On Revival: A Critical Examination* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2003), pp. 4-5.

⁴ 'Taevaskäijad' [Heaven-Goers], in *Eesti Entsüklopeedia* [Estonian Encyclopaedia], vol. 9 (Tallinn: Eesti Entsüklopeediakirjastus, 1996), p. 185.

prophetic messages about the second coming of Christ.⁵ A characteristic feature of these events was also social unrest, anxiety, and a conflict between farmers and landowners about ownership of land and taxation.⁶ Among the awakened there was mild criticism of the existing church, and neglecting, in some cases on principle, participation in the Lord's Supper in the local Lutheran parish.⁷ Maltsvet invited his followers to wait for a 'White Ship' and to emigrate from the Baltics into Crimea, the Promised Land, where they expected to find better living conditions. Some separatist elements, as modest as these were in the Maltsvet-movement, as well as openness to eschatological and prophetic messages, allow one to notice relative similarities with the revival that broke out in the 1870s.

More directly, the revival events on the west coast were connected to Moravian theology and spirituality.⁸ No doubt, there were also notable differences, especially when the revivalist movement took a separatist course which led it away from Lutheran structures. This course, which included rejection of infant baptism, was not acceptable to the Moravians. By the mid-nineteenth century there were about 70,000 Moravians in Estonia and Livonia, about ten per cent of the whole population, which gathered in approximately 250 societies.⁹ Later, by the 1870s, the movement subsided, but a considerable Christian subculture had been established, where ordinary believers had an opportunity to be actively involved in religious life and decision making. The Moravians also took more responsibility for their own views and interpretations of the Bible. This formed the basis, at least in part, for the following development of the free-church-type movements and congregations, which relied heavily on personal experience and lived-out convictions of faith.

Both Moravians and the adherents of the West Coast Revival stressed repentance and serious religious conversion. In addition, several chapels or prayer houses of revivalist believers, and later Baptists as well, borrowed their architectural models from the Moravians. Both the Moravians and the revivalist believers strove to practise higher moral standards, for example, refusing dancing and other 'worldly merriments'. The spiritual change could be demarcated by material markers, such as destroying personal ornaments. Some awakened farmers 'publicly buried their smoke pipes'.¹⁰ Both movements contain stories of how theft and alcohol consumption declined,

⁵ Ernst Ader, 'Eesti usuajalugu' [Estonian Religious History], VII, typewritten manuscript (no place, no date), pp. 762-3. Archives of the Union of the Evangelical Christian and Baptist Churches of Estonia, Tartu.

⁶ Seppo Zetterberg, *Eesti ajalugu* [A History of Estonia] (Tallinn: Tänapäev, 2009), p. 281.

⁷ Riho Saard, 'Vilde kui maltsvetluse konstrueerija' [Vilde as a Constructor of Maltsvet-movement], *Keel ja Kirjandus* [Language and Literature], no. 5 (2015), p. 335.

⁸ Plaat, *Usuliikumised*, p. 61.

⁹ Ilmar Talve, *Eesti kultuurilugu* [A History of Estonian Culture] (Tartu: Ilmamaa, 2004), p. 324; Olaf Sild, Vello Salo, *Lühike Eesti kirikulugu* [A Short Estonian Church History] (Tartu, 1995), p. 111.

¹⁰ Plaat, *Usuliikumised*, pp. 59, 69.

even though the gap between ideals and reality could not always be bridged.¹¹

For instance, Mihkel Busch, from Ridala parish, wrote about the Revival, probably referring to the late 1870s. According to Busch, a group of men from Haapsalu went to the nearby Vormsi Island, inhabited by Estonian Swedes, to collect timber. On their way they lost a rope. ‘When they returned a fortnight later, they found the rope hanging on the top of a fence by the road. News spread on the mainland: those Swedes have become so holy now, there are no men on the island who would have taken the rope, and there is not a drop of vodka anywhere! One could die of thirst!’¹² The revivalist movement, born in the framework of local pietism, and indirectly affected by previous bursts of religious enthusiasm, was having a transformative effect on both beliefs and practices. The culturally ‘Coastal Swedish’ Vormsi and Noarootsi were the ‘strongholds’ of the new movement in its initial stages.

As to international influences, the Swedish neo-pietism made a strong impact on the West Coast Revival. In the following section some light will be thrown on this process.

Influence of Swedish Pietism

The activities of the pietistic Lutheran missionaries from Sweden who worked among the Swedish-speaking communities in Western Estonia in the 1870s and 1880s were the immediate driving force of the West Coast Revival. In the 1870s *Evangeliska Fosterlandsstiftelsen* (The Evangelical Homeland Foundation of Sweden), a neo-pietistic missionary organisation, sent five school teachers as missionaries to Estonia. Their goals were to facilitate school education and spiritual life in Swedish-speaking villages. The best known of the five were Thure Emanuel Thorén and Lars Johan Österblom, ‘the Swede-awakeners’,¹³ who became initiators and key figures of the Revival. The first worked in Noarootsi, the latter on the island of Vormsi. The religious movement, ignited by prayers, Bible study, and focus on an ethical lifestyle, soon also attracted the Estonian-speaking population.

The missionaries’ arrival in the Baltic Province of Tsarist Russia had been introduced by events a couple of years earlier, in 1871, when an international delegation of the Evangelical Alliance, including Swedish

¹¹ R. Põldmäe, ‘Eesti vennastekoguduse võitlusest rahva joomapahega’ [About Estonian Moravians’ Fight against the Vice of Drinking], *Eesti Kirjandus* [Estonian Literature], no. 6 (1938), pp. 281-2, 288-293; Plaat, *Usuliikumised*, p. 69.

¹² Mihkel Busch, *Ridala ärkamise ajalugu* [A History of the Revival in Ridala] (Keila: K.-Ü. ‘Külvaja’ trükk, 1928), p. 15.

¹³ Kaups, ed., *50 aastat apostlite radadel*, p. 102.

representatives, visited St Petersburg.¹⁴ The delegation met with high Tsarist officials and discussed issues of religious freedom. Besides other questions, an attempt was made to secure agreement that people who had converted to Russian Orthodoxy in the middle of the nineteenth century, would be allowed to return to the Lutheran church, which attempt, as is widely known, had proved far more complicated than expected. An Estonian researcher Jaanus Plaat claims that in 1881 there were 4148 Estonian Swedes in Western Estonia, most of them dwelling in Noarootsi and Vormsi.¹⁵

As Swedish church and government circles became attentive to their compatriots' situation in Tsarist Russia, a considerable sum of money had been raised to cover the Swedish delegation members' travelling costs, out of which four thousand kroons remained unused. What to do with them? Perhaps buy Bibles? Lars Erik Mozell, pastor of Swedish Mihkli (St Michael's) church in Tallinn gave this advice: there are enough Bibles, but instead, teacher-missionaries should be sent to help improve literacy.¹⁶ Indeed, action was taken. Karl Kaups, an Estonian Baptist leader in the interwar period, stated in 1934 in a volume published by his brother, Richard Kaups, that the Baptist movement in Estonia was a direct consequence of the work of Swedish missionaries.¹⁷ Perhaps he was stretching the truth slightly, but there is no doubt that Estonian Baptists, telling their story, repeatedly confirmed their links with the West Coast Revival.

Thure Emanuel Thorén (1843-1930) came from an old Swedish family. In Estonia, he became a schoolmaster in Paslepa Teachers' Seminary, established in 1873, which initially trained teachers for primary schools. Altogether about 30 students graduated from Paslepa Seminary between 1873 and 1887.¹⁸ Thorén put a great emphasis on religious education. Prayer meetings, sermons in the neighbourhood, promotion of abstinence, and exhortations to live a moral lifestyle were an inseparable part of his activity. In 1928 his work was described as follows:

The local pastor met him with kindness and offered him accommodation in which he stayed for a while. Soon the pastor's female servants started talking in the village saying that a strange young man had arrived from Sweden, who does not talk much, does not laugh but sings dancing tunes with sacred lyrics.¹⁹

¹⁴ Ian Randall, 'Eastern European Baptists and the Evangelical Alliance, 1846-1896', in Sharyl Corrado and Toivo Pilli, eds., *Eastern European Baptist History: New Perspectives* (Prague: IBTS, 2007), pp. 22-23.

¹⁵ Plaat, *Usuliikumised*, p. 62.

¹⁶ H. Tuttar and H. V. Dahl, *Ärkamise aeg* [A Time of Revival] (Tallinn: EBK Selts, 1929), pp. 41-42.

¹⁷ Karl Kaups, 'Kõjuhüütud ustavaid sulaseid' [Faithful Servants Who Have Been Called Home], in Richard Kaups, ed., *50 aastat apostlite radadel*, p. 101.

¹⁸ Villem Altoa and Paul Ariste, 'Ühest varjujäänud õppeasutisest. Passlepa seminar 1873-1887' [About a Forgotten Educational Institution: Paslepa Teachers' Seminary 1873-1887], *Eesti Kirjandus*, no. 5 (1936), p. 225.

¹⁹ Busch, *Ridala ärkamise ajalugu*, pp. 11-12.

These merry tunes were revival songs of Swedish origin. According to Thorén, people had to become aware of their sinful nature, repent, be revived through the Holy Spirit and the word of God, and experience spiritual new birth.²⁰

The work of the teacher and missionary had remarkable results: religious activity soared in the area. ‘Grave sins’ decreased in Noarootsi and more people attended sermons, communion, and prayer meetings, as was pointed out with appreciation by the Lutheran dean of the region, Wilhelm Reinhold Girgensohn.²¹ However, the dean felt uneasy about emotional outbursts accompanying the movement.

Thorén’s ideas were carried forward by his students who became teachers. An essential ‘missionary task’ was performed by songs, sermons, and probably some literature that was mediated to those interested. Thorén’s work was valued by Moravian preachers, and enhanced by the activities of the colporteurs of the Bible Society. The most convincing and credible ‘revival missionaries’ were the revived themselves. From Paslepa the innovative ideas and enthusiastic spirituality travelled further to Sutlepa parish, where Estonians dominated the population, then to Lääne-Nigula and Ridala, and finally to Pärnu county by 1880. Thus the movement crossed the borders of the west coast area and expanded further on the mainland of Estonia. Thorén returned to Sweden in 1882.²²

Lars Johan Österblom (1837-1932) graduated from Johannelund Missionary Institute, Sweden, and in 1873 he was sent to Estonia to become a missionary and school teacher.²³ He settled in Vormsi where he created an environment with a particular revival atmosphere, which later inspired Revivalist Free believers and the Baptists. Even before his arrival on the island, about fifty members of the Lutheran church used to come together separately after the main Lutheran worship service. This group organised devotional meetings, apparently following the pattern of the Moravians with simple lay preaching and corporate singing.²⁴ Österblom seemed stricter and more radical in comparison with Thorén, and he criticised the local pastor Alexander Nordgren more openly.

Österblom’s missionary work was characterised by Christian and moral teachings, but also by education, and advice regarding issues of

²⁰ Plaat, *Usuliikumised*, p. 63.

²¹ Plaat, *Usuliikumised*, p. 64.

²² Richard Kaups, ed., *50 aastat apostlite radadel*, p. 103.

²³ Ernst Ader, ‘Eesti usuajalugu: Läänemaa ärkamine ja selle tagajärgi’ [Estonian Religious History: West Coast Revival and its Consequences], VIII, typewritten manuscript (no place, no date), p. 54. A copy available through the author.

²⁴ Riho Saard, ‘Baptismi Viron ja Pohjois-Liivinmaan kuvernementeissa, 1865-1920’ [The Baptist Movement in the Provinces of Estonia and Northern-Livonia, 1865-1920], pro gradu thesis (Helsinki University, 1994), p. 19.

hygiene and health care. During his time of missionary service, several schools were built on Vormsi, along with a hospital and a nursing home. Österblom applied an age-related methodology in teaching children: instead of punishment, he gave small gifts to children and in this way motivated them for learning.²⁵ The Revival in Vormsi was also characterised by an abstinence movement, which resulted in several pubs closing down on the island. Another wave of awakening began in about 1876, after which Österblom preached in crowded farm houses and even outdoors.

Some awakened persons fell on the ground, and remained motionless like dead, when salvation and peace filled their hearts. Others greeted their becoming God's children with jumping in joy and jubilation.²⁶

The Revival, together with its religious aspirations and emotional phenomena, spread from Vormsi to Hiiumaa and the mainland. In 1887 Österblom had to leave Estonia. By that time, formed by the awakened brothers and sisters, there were both a Revivalist Free and a Baptist congregation in Hiiumaa Island.²⁷ The Revival was translated into more stable ecclesial structures.

Both Swedish missionaries worked for about ten to fifteen years on the west coast, and a widespread movement gained momentum, which continued along an independent path and resonated with both the Swedish and Estonian-speaking population. By 1882 at the latest, though probably earlier, the movement had taken a clearly separatist direction.

Towards Confessional Separatism

It is possible to describe the spiritual trajectory of the West Coast Revival as a movement from a Rosenius-like awakening towards a Waldenström-like separatism.²⁸ In other words, it is a development which began with religious conversion, repentance – with feelings of regret and anxiety – and an experience of spiritual freedom. Then the process moved towards attempts to interpret the 'innovative' religious experiences in the light of the Bible, and also developed towards separation from the dominant churches, mainly from the Lutheran, but in some cases also from the Orthodox. The adherents of the Revival attempted to establish their own religious identity.

The ministries of the revivalist figures, Carl Olof Rosenius (1816-1868) and Paul Peter Waldenström (1838-1917), in Sweden, offer a wider

²⁵ Tuttar and Dahl, *Ärkamise aeg*, pp. 48-49.

²⁶ Plaat, *Usuliikumised*, p. 69.

²⁷ A. Seppur, *Jees. Krist. Evg. Priikoguduse tekkimine ja levinemine Läänemaa ärkamises* [The Beginning and Development of Jesus Christ's Evangelical Free Church in the West Coast Revival] (Toronto, 1970), pp. 63-66; Kaups, ed., *50 aastat apostlite radadel*, pp. 30-32.

²⁸ Saard, 'Baptismi', pp. 18-24.

background to developments which, on a smaller scale, were reflected in the West Coast Revival. Rosenius, a Lutheran minister, played a key role in setting up the *Evangeliska Fosterlandsstiftelsen* in 1856, and led its later work. The aim of this organisation was a religious revival in the Swedish Lutheran Church.²⁹ He had close working contacts with the Evangelical Alliance and with the Moravian movement. However, Rosenius, though being influenced by missionary endeavours in Europe and North America and being aware of the free church spirituality, remained a faithful member of the Swedish Lutheran church all his life and did not sympathise with separatist trends.³⁰

Paul Peter Waldenström, a theologian and clergyman, in his turn, took a stance which clearly led towards separatism, though, at the beginning, his goal was not to establish a new denomination. He was active in the *Evangeliska Fosterlandsstiftelsen*, which he left in 1878 in order to establish the Swedish Mission Union ((*Svenska Missionsförbundet*), which later became the Swedish Mission Covenant Church (*Svenska Missionskyrkan*). Though Waldenström had already resigned from the Swedish Lutheran church in 1882, he became the official leader of the Mission Covenant Church only in 1904.³¹ An able theologian, with degrees from Uppsala and Yale, he made a major impact on the spirituality and theology of free churches in Sweden in the nineteenth century.³²

Rosenius and Waldenström represent theological trends of thinking which indirectly, mediated by Thorén and Österblom as well as by literature, affected religious revival on the west coast of Estonia. Thorén and Österblom were aware of renewal efforts within the Swedish Lutheran context and, obviously, both agreed with these efforts to a greater or lesser extent. Thorén encouraged his students to read the publication *Pietisten*, a literary enterprise first led by Rosenius, and later by Waldenström.³³ Although the missionaries did not explicitly recommend separation from the established church, they mediated information regarding events relating to free churches in the world.

As early as 1877 the followers of the Revival had discussed with Thorén issues of separating from the Lutheran church. His response was diplomatic:

Abroad, there are large crowds of believers, who are separate from the church they do not want to be in, and they have their independent activities, and elect a brother

²⁹ Jerald Brauer, ed., *The Westminster Dictionary of Church History* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1971), p. 728.

³⁰ Gunnar Westin, *Vapaan kristillisyyden historia* [The Free Church Through the Ages] (Tikkurila: Ristin Voitto, 1975), p. 414.

³¹ Brauer, ed., *The Westminster Dictionary*, p. 855.

³² Westin, *Vapaan kristillisyyden historia*, pp. 471-473.

³³ Saard, 'Baptismi', p. 19.

from among themselves who takes the lead in spiritual matters and ordinances. But we do not support this here, we leave it for people to decide.³⁴

Nevertheless, some of the awakened believers in Vormsi and Sutlepa started to organise communion in small groups in the same year, which no doubt indicates religious separatism. In Vormsi, partly driven by the resentment against the unpopular local Lutheran pastor, Alexander Nordgren, the supporters of awakening also arranged their own prayer meetings, Bible reading, funerals, and other ordinances.³⁵ In addition, the awakened farmers and former students of Paslepa Teachers' Seminary in Noarootsi attempted to interpret the Bible in a forthright way and find scriptural justification for the steps they took. Riho Saard, an Estonian church historian, states: 'By the beginning of the 1880s, the Rosenius-type revival had clearly inclined towards a Waldenström-like direction, and was drifting away from the [Lutheran] church.'³⁶

Although separatist phenomena can be traced back to the 1870s, the Lord's Supper celebrated in September 1882 in Ridala, not far from the coastal town of Haapsalu, obtained a symbolic meaning in the later history of Estonian free churches, especially for the Revivalist Free church (*Est. priikogudus*) believers who directly inherited the nineteenth-century revivalist spirituality, and also for Baptists. From the Lutheran view a separate communion was a severe breaking of church discipline and the Ridala pastor, Magnus Hörschelmann, soon announced that nine persons had left the Lutheran congregation.³⁷ It is another question whether the awakened believers left of their free will, or if they were expelled with the purpose of disciplining the obstinate.³⁸ The believers also conducted a baptism, probably by pouring. Mihkel Busch described: 'The baptism took place by a stream but after the Lutheran church fashion.'³⁹ Nevertheless, the baptism was a theological statement in practice, since the believers had to confess their faith and give witness to their repentance. As the result of inspiration derived from abroad and separatist actions taken, the 'new believers' were becoming aware of the congregational church model as an alternative way of being a church. Separation became irreversible.

The revival process on the west coast of Estonia in the nineteenth century was a multifaceted popular movement which included simple Biblical interpretation, separatist actions, as well as emotional and enthusiastic phenomena.

³⁴ Busch, *Ridala ärkamise ajalugu*, p. 27.

³⁵ Plaat, *Usuliikumised*, p. 85.

³⁶ Saard, 'Baptismi', pp. 22-23.

³⁷ Saard, 'Baptismi', p. 23.

³⁸ Seppur, *Jees. Krist. Evg. Priikoguduse tekkimine*, pp. 27-28.

³⁹ Busch, *Ridala ärkamise ajalugu*, p. 31.

Enthusiastic Religious Phenomena

The Revival on the Estonian west coast, similar to some earlier religious movements, such as Great Awakenings in America, can be characterised by eagerness, emotionality, and in some cases ecstatic outbursts. ‘Renewal was experienced as renewal of enthusiasm rather than performance of an unchanging liturgy’, as Diarmaid MacCulloch has described the Great Awakenings.⁴⁰ The quotation refers to eighteenth-century America, but is helpful also in describing the spiritual atmosphere and worship goals in the West Coast Revival. In Estonia, jumping, clapping of hands, *glossolalia* or speaking in tongues, visions, and apocalyptic expectations were just a few examples of enthusiasm. Emotional intensiveness, which exemplified the religious experience of those participating in the Revival, ranged from dramatic repentance and tears to joyful cheering and shouting. Sometimes people attended the revivalist meetings out of curiosity, being less interested in sermons and more in seeing people ‘drunk without vodka’, as the awakened persons were occasionally called.⁴¹ Critics of the movement thought of these signs as examples of religious madness, while the supporters viewed them as the admirable work of the Holy Spirit. The awakened folk, and later the Revivalist Free believers, held ‘joy’ as a key concept that defined their religious experience. A Revivalist Free church author Aleksander Seppur wrote: ‘In the warmth of joy bitterness disappears, and, indeed, hardships of life are forgotten.’⁴²

A number of religious phenomena in these Revival events were explicitly different from common experiences. For instance, some believers described fantastic visions of heaven and hell, told about what kind of food was eaten in heaven, or how Satan cast souls into eternal fire. Several visions directly affected the behaviour of these prophets or enthusiastic believers: some waited for the wings of angels to grow on them in order to fly into heaven, some called upon their followers to wait for a ship or a cloud which would take them to Canaan, the promised land. Some of these experiences resemble the earlier heaven-goers movement and the message of prophet Maltsvet and his followers. According to literature, in some cases immoral sexual relationships occurred between the believers carried away by the revival enthusiasm. At times, religious ecstasy was accompanied by trembling or losing consciousness.⁴³

⁴⁰ Diarmaid MacCulloch, *A History of Christianity* (London: Allen Lane, 2009), p. 759.

⁴¹ Busch, *Ridala ärkamise ajalugu*, p. 24.

⁴² Seppur, *Jees. Krist. Evg. Priikoguduse tekkimine*, p. 18.

⁴³ Plaat, *Usuliikumised*, pp. 66, 69.

This kind of evidence should, doubtless, be seen with certain reservations and analysed critically, since the press and critics of the movement tended to magnify these stories, as Jaanus Plaat, an Estonian cultural anthropologist and historian, has stated. He writes: 'The believers of the more peaceful disposition, who formed the majority in the movement after its tumultuous initial years, were much less frequently paid attention to.'⁴⁴ In 1881 an Estonian publication printed a reader's letter from Noarootsi which argued that 'our journals have talked more of the religious movement's negative than its positive aspects'.⁴⁵ However, the West Coast Revival was not a homogeneous stream but rather had several focal points and spiritual tendencies, with both extreme and moderate views.

The revival movement itself, particularly in the 1880s, began critically to evaluate the enthusiastic practices and developments; self-regulation and identity-seeking processes were formed within the movement. The prophetic messages and spiritualistic commands came to be tested by the scriptures and more sober interpretations of emerging leaders. Some leaders of the movement were looking for more balanced and stable congregational structures. These factors were important when Baptist congregations emerged in 1884 and advice was sought from the German Baptist pastor Adam Reinhold Schiewe in St Petersburg.⁴⁶ A Baptist-Revivalist author described the situation about a half a century later: 'Satan despatched powerful spirits from the depths of Hell who appeared like angels of light. They captured poor human souls and made them heavily delusional.'⁴⁷ This sentence reflects an evaluation issued from a historical perspective and from within the revivalist tradition itself. Social respectability and internal stability were now highlighted.

Some Lutheran clergy admitted the positive impact of the Revival. For example, Magnus Hörschmann, pastor in Ridala parish, mentioned a particularly blessed confirmation period around 1880, and 'admonished his colleagues to speak more of the Holy Spirit'.⁴⁸ Woldemar Schultz, the General Superintendent in Estonia, also noted that the movement was 'against sins prevailing among people', though he was critical because of the 'methodistic-impulsive' (German *methodistisch-schwärmerisch*) characteristics of it.⁴⁹ Thus negative attitudes towards the followers of the Revival gradually grew, often because of the emotional features which were

⁴⁴ Plaat, *Usuliikumised*, p. 77, see also pp. 74-83.

⁴⁵ *Eesti Postimees* [Estonian Postman], no. 23 (10 June 1881), p. 90.

⁴⁶ Toivo Pilli, 'Eesti baptistid ja nende teoloogilise mõtte kajastumine ajakirjas "Teekäija" kuni 1940' [Estonian Baptists and Their Theology as Reflected in *Teekäija* until 1940], Master's Thesis (University of Tartu, 1996), pp. 10, 13.

⁴⁷ Busch, *Ridala ärkamise ajalugu*, p. 32.

⁴⁸ Plaat, *Usuliikumised*, pp. 70-71.

⁴⁹ Woldemar Schultz, 'Die neue Bewegung unter dem estländischen Landvolk' [A New Movement among Estonian People], *Baltische Montasschrift*, vol. XVII (1880), p. 580.

perceived as strange and uncontrollable. However, I argue in this article that the key-reason for rejection and even persecution of the revivalist believers was deeper: the new ecclesiological paradigm that these believers represented threatened the established patterns of ecclesiastical and theological authority.

New Ecclesial Paradigm Causes Opposition

The ‘awakened’ believers met opposition both from Tsarist Russian officials and from the existing traditional churches, both Lutheran and Orthodox, though there were individual exceptions. The believers themselves interpreted the pressures as suffering for their faith and for being faithful to the scriptures. In the last instance they understood the pressures as a revenge from Satan who was not satisfied that ‘one after another of his victims were detached from him [liberated]’.⁵⁰ While the ‘new teaching’ of repentance, conversion, and separatism spread more widely, the ‘persecutions also increased proportionally’.⁵¹ August Johannson, an Estonian Baptist author, in 1911, referred back to the 1880s and the trials that the awakened believers were undergoing: ‘How much they were dragged to courts, arrested, fined – all this could suffice for a thick book in itself.’⁵² A young believer was beaten with a bunch of twigs for unauthorised speaking at a revivalist meeting, but he ran ‘with bleeding back’ to the village, ‘proclaimed boldly the love of Christ’ and was ‘thankful that he was considered worthy to suffer for the name of Jesus’.⁵³ It is clear that experiences of suffering for their newly found beliefs strengthened the sense of belonging of these believers, and became a mark of identity for the movement.

The government and clerical representatives saw the situation from a different angle: they sensed a danger to the authority of existing structures. Often their criticism of the Revival was expressed in language that defended social stability: the revival phenomena endangered the public order.⁵⁴ The ‘new believers’, with their messy egalitarianism, rocked the *status quo* of the existing hierarchical church patterns and practices. The revivalist ecclesiology was different, and this became visible especially after concrete separatist steps were taken by the ‘new believers’. The congregational agenda was considered as unheard of, and perceived even as arrogant, by and for the established religious and societal system.

⁵⁰ Tuttar and Dahl, *Ärkamise aeg*, p. 67.

⁵¹ *Eesti Baptisti koguduste ajaloolik Album 25 Juubeli aasta mälestuseks* [In Commemoration of the 25th Anniversary: A Historical Album of Estonian Baptist Churches] (Tallinn, 1911), p. 5.

⁵² *Eesti Baptisti koguduste ajaloolik Album*, p. 5.

⁵³ Seppur, *Jees. Krist. Evg. Priikoguduse tekkimine*, p. 16.

⁵⁴ Plaat, *Usuliikumised*, p. 72.

As the Revival expanded and took its own route, tensions grew between the awakened and the pastors. The believers were accused of disrespect towards clergy, disobedience towards secular officials and even of neglecting their everyday work because of frequent prayer meetings.⁵⁵ The Orthodox church was similarly critical regarding the revival movement.⁵⁶ The young Estonian-language press also upheld a rather negative attitude: Carl Robert Jakobson, a key leader in the Estonian national awakening, published a sharp criticism against ‘the children of the stinky spirit’ in his *Sakala* newspaper in 1881.⁵⁷ Fines and short-term detentions were imposed on believers by the state authorities, for example for conducting worship services without permission.⁵⁸

The West Coast Revival increased the self-awareness and initiative of the Swedish and Estonian-speaking countryside population. The ‘newborn’ believers found a confidence that was expressed in their religious practices: simple worship, extemporaneous prayers, grassroots level interpretation of the Bible, leaders elected from among themselves, baptisms and communion conducted without any external-official permission or control. All this prepared the soil for Estonian Revivalist Free churches and Baptist churches. These churches introduced a new ecclesial paradigm, a congregational way of doing church, with elected indigenous leaders, local church meetings making decisions, believers taking the initiative and attempting in the light of scriptures to arrange and organise congregational life, as well as their personal relations and behaviour. They formed believers’ churches, an ecclesial reality which Donald Durnbaugh has characterised as gathering, mutually supportive and corrective communities, and striving to walk in the way of Jesus Christ.⁵⁹

Baptist Churches Established

Estonian Free Church beginnings in the 1880s, especially Baptist and Revivalist Free churches, were built on the revival spirituality of the 1870s and early 1880s. The awakened, who focused on a fresh reading of the New Testament, emotional experiences of repentance and forgiveness, and radical turning away from the corrupt ways of the ‘worldly lifestyle’, formed the core of the newly established churches. The Revivalist Free churches remained informal and spontaneous for longer, and they kept alive the worship culture of joy and excitement. Baptist churches, though born in the

⁵⁵ Plaat, *Usuliikumised*, p. 71; Schultz, ‘Die neue Bewegung’, pp. 581-582.

⁵⁶ Tuttar and Dahl, *Ärkamise aeg*, pp. 87-90.

⁵⁷ *Sakala*, no. 4 (24 January 1881), [p. 3].

⁵⁸ *Eesti Baptisti koguduste ajaloolik Album*, pp. 5-7; Busch, *Ridala ärkamise ajalugu*, pp. 32-33, 40-45.

⁵⁹ Donald F. Durnbaugh, *The Believers’ Church: The History and Character of Radical Protestantism* (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1968), p. 33.

same context and initially practising worship which was comparatively similar to that of the Revivalist Free churches, began to seek more sustainable ways of organising their life, including applying for government recognition.

In Tsarist Russia the revivalist groups had no legal permission for forming congregations or conducting worship services. Some revivalist groups deliberately refused to yield to earthly authorities, which they considered an act of limiting the work of the Spirit. Baptists were less radical in this sense. In 1879 in Tsarist Russia ‘the government issued the recognition of German Baptists as a corporate body with legal rights along with other denominations’.⁶⁰ This was an important milestone. Whether Estonian-speaking Baptists would be counted within or without the frame of this privilege certainly depended on local officials and their interpretation. The Revivalist Free believers, however, lacked even this type of ambiguous protection – they could be considered religious outlaws in Estonia at the end of the nineteenth century.

The West Coast Revival marked a movement seeking a personal confidence of the conversion experience and an ethical lifestyle. Besides, it developed towards separatist elements, such as the baptismal and communion events in the fellowship of the ‘believers’, outside Lutheran or Orthodox congregations. Therefore, it is only natural that the first Baptist church in Estonia was established in the west coast region, in the town of Haapsalu in 1884. The steps towards establishing a Baptist church were prepared by the Revival. Paradoxically, the decision to establish a church after Baptist principles of faith and practice was at the same time a critique of the Revival events, especially its ‘heated’ and disorganised spirituality. Some young revivalist leaders were not satisfied with the undisciplined spontaneity of the movement and emotional excesses that accompanied the Revival.⁶¹ As already mentioned, they began to seek a model that would offer a more stable environment for new believers for worship and discipleship.

This model was found in the St Petersburg German Baptist church where Adam Reinhold Schiewe had been working as a missionary pastor since 1880.⁶² The need for at least some kind of legal protection also had become urgent. Even if the revivalist groups accepted hardships as a sign of New Testament lifestyle and discipleship, nevertheless, ‘as the persecutions intensified, they at last decided to demand their rights’.⁶³ In September 1883

⁶⁰ Albert W. Wardin, *On the Edge: Baptists and Other Free Church Evangelicals in Tsarist Russia, 1855-1917* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock, 2013), p. 90.

⁶¹ *Eesti Baptisti koguduste ajaloolik Album*, pp. 7-11.

⁶² Wardin, *On the Edge*, p. 45.

⁶³ August Johannson, ‘Baptismuse tulek Eestimaale’ [How the Baptist Movement Came to Estonia], in *Eesti Baptisti koguduste ajaloolik Album*, p. 6.

a delegation of three persons was sent to St Petersburg, where they learned more about German Baptists. Schiewe was not overly happy concerning what he heard about the Estonian revival: he criticised the mode of baptism by pouring, practised by Estonian awakened believers, and later he was shocked by the amorphous and emotionally intense style of worship that he met in Estonia.⁶⁴ However, upon a repeated request, Schiewe visited Estonia, and on 11 February (OS) 1884 baptised by immersion a group of believers who then formed a Baptist church. The baptism took place in a hole made in the ice of the Ungu River. The day was cold, it was about minus sixteen degrees Celsius outside. In the same year, small groups of Baptist believers formed congregations in Kärkla, Pärnu, and some other places.⁶⁵ A handwritten report states that by the end of 1900 in Estonia there were eight Baptist churches, and seven mission stations, with a total membership of 1343.⁶⁶ It was a significant growth.

Besides German Baptist influences, links to the Evangelical Alliance, and some holiness spirituality, often through personal contacts, also emerged at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century.⁶⁷ However, Estonian Baptists continued to value their revivalist heritage. In 1934, Karl Kaups, the president of the Baptist Union, emphasised, somewhat festively, that Baptist churches were born in a 'breeze of a spring wind of spiritual revival'. According to Kaups, 'personal conversion, inner renewal of individuals and free commitment to God' – these basic truths – were 'first time fully practiced' in the West Coast Revival and in the free churches established as a consequence.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ Richard Kaups, *Hea Sõnum ja Eesti Baptisti kogudused* [A Good Message and Estonian Baptist Churches] (Santa Barbara, 1974), p. 68; Seppur, *Jees. Krist. Evg. Priikoguduse tekkimine*, pp. 32-33.

⁶⁵ Toivo Pilli, 'Eesti baptistid ja nende teoloogilise mõtte kajastumine', pp. 10-12.

⁶⁶ Eesti Baptisti koguduste aruanne 1900 [A report of Estonian Baptist Churches 1900], Aruanded [Reports], Archives of the Union of the Evangelical Christian and Baptist Churches of Estonia, Tartu.

⁶⁷ See Gregory L. Nichols, *The Development of Russian Evangelical Spirituality: A Study of Ivan V. Kargel (1849-1937)* (Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick, 2011), pp. 140-143; Toivo Pilli, 'Adam Podin: An Estonian Baptist with International Links and Pan-Evangelical Vision', in Pieter J. Lalleman, Peter J. Morden and Anthony R. Cross, eds., *Grounded in Grace: Essays to Honour Ian M. Randall* (London and Didcot: Spurgeon's College and Baptist Historical Society, 2013), pp. 103-117.

⁶⁸ Karl Kaups, 'Eesti Baptismi ideelised põhialused' [Conceptual Foundations of Estonian Baptist Movement], in Richard Kaups, ed., *50 aastat apostlite radadel*, p. 11.

Concluding Remarks

The Revival in the west coast region of Estonia in the 1870s and 1880s continued the pietistic spirituality of the Moravian tradition, and some smaller local movements, which underlined repentance, religious experiences, and a simple grassroots level interpretation of the Bible. An important impetus came from Swedish Lutheran neo-pietism, especially through missionaries Thoren and Österblom, who from 1873 worked in Vormsi and Noarootsi; they conducted Bible studies and prayer meetings, and helped to enhance the Christian ethical lifestyle among local people.

Separatist tendencies became stronger among revivalist groups in the 1880s, which led to intensified persecution by traditional churches and by Tsarist Russian officials. The reason for opposition to the ‘newborn’ believers was not only the enthusiastic and ecstatic phenomena that accompanied the Revival. A deeper reason was the innovative congregational paradigm that the Revival began to introduce. This was incompatible with Lutheran and Orthodox ecclesiological convictions. An attempt to find legal protection, but also to take some distance from the extreme emotional phenomena, prompted the leading figures of the Revival to seek for better organised forms of church life. A trustworthy model was found in the St Petersburg German-speaking Baptist church. The German pastor Adam Reinhold Schiewe travelled to Estonia, conducted baptism by immersion in 1884, and helped to organise the Haapsalu Baptist Church. With their focus on emotional repentance, dramatic conversion, and experiential faith the early Baptists in Estonia carried on the revivalist spirituality, though Schiewe and local Baptist leaders guided the churches towards more structured, rational, and balanced ways.

The Revivalist Free believers, who unofficially formed congregations, and Baptists, who functioned under relative legal protection, introduced a new concept of being a church in Estonia – a congregational model. Arranging one’s religious life freely, though sometimes in a stubborn and unexpected manner in the eyes of the wider society, helped Estonians as an ethnic group to take the initiative and to learn independent decision making and democratic self-governing of their communal bodies in gathered congregations. It can be partly interpreted as a protest against the established Lutheran church, which was often led by pastors with German ethnic roots. One may even assume that it helped to strengthen Estonian national identity, though through a religious filter. The aspect of initiative and increased self-confidence among Estonians is sometimes mentioned in relation to the Moravian movement, yet much less noted in the context of the West Coast Revival. The story of the Revival and the beginning of free church structures in Estonia is also a story of religious freedom, though played out on a smaller

scale than in wider Europe. These topics, however, cannot be expanded within the limits of this article.

As a brief summary, the revival movement in Western Estonia in the last quarter of the nineteenth century prepared the ground for the birth of new denominations, such as Baptists and Revivalist Free churches, which were based on a greater initiative of their members, congregational ecclesial patterns, and on the convictions of the believers' church.

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Baptists and Modern Missions: Historical Movement and Contemporary Reflections¹

Melody Maxwell

Baptists played a significant role in the modern missionary movement. Beginning in the late eighteenth century, missionaries such as William Carey, Adoniram and Ann Judson, George Liele, and Johann Oncken sought to spread the gospel around the world. In addition to direct evangelistic endeavours, Baptist missionaries of this period engaged in educational and healthcare ministries, as well as, to a lesser degree, translation and agricultural work. Twenty-first-century Christians can discover and analyse principles of missions from Baptist history that can help us better understand our heritage and improve our missions efforts in today's globalised world. These include the priority of missions; the importance of holistic ministries, justice, and advocacy; creative ways of overcoming obstacles; the strategic role of diaspora populations; organisational flexibility; the role of majority world Christians; and God's provision for the missionary task.

Key Words

Baptist; Missions; Missionary; History

Introduction

“Every Baptist a missionary”; “Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God”. These famous slogans of early Baptist missionaries Johann Gerhard Oncken and William Carey typify the commitment to missions that arose among Baptists and other Protestants during the modern missionary movement, beginning at the end of the eighteenth century. At this time, around nine out of ten Christians lived in Europe or North America, which became the centres of missionary sending activity. A little more than 200 years later, however, most believers resided in the majority world.² This remarkable change was largely the result of the modern missionary movement.³ Through this movement, Baptists played a significant role in

¹ An earlier version of this paper was presented by the author as part of her service on the Mission Commission of the Baptist World Alliance.

² Wilbert R. Shenk, ‘Reflections on the Modern Missionary Movement: 1792-1992’, *Mission Studies* 9, no. 1 (1992), p. 62; Todd M. Johnson et al., *Christianity in its Global Context, 1970–2020: Society, Religion, and Mission* (South Hamilton, MA: Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, 2013), p. 7. The majority world is the area of the world in which most people live: Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

³ Other factors that contributed to the growth of the church in the majority world include migration, indigenous evangelism, and the spread of the church on former mission fields.

sending missionaries to evangelise men, women, and children in hundreds of locations around the world. In fact, historian David Bebbington has called the foreign missionary movement the ‘most important development’ in all of Baptist history.⁴ This movement is thus a significant and worthy topic of inquiry for Baptists today. We must understand Baptists’ history as a missional people, and analyse our past mission strategies, in order to better prepare for missions today and in the future.⁵

History

Baptists were not the first Christians to engage in missions; multiple Catholic missionaries, for example, had served cross-culturally even before the Baptist movement began in 1609.⁶ Early Protestants generally invested more energy in doctrinal matters than in missions, but by the eighteenth century some had begun to emphasise missions. European Pietists and Moravians pioneered heart-felt Protestant missionary efforts to what they considered the far reaches of the world. As awakenings swept through England and the United States around the same time, religious fervour increased in these countries alongside the desire for others to know God. Travelling to other countries to evangelise seemed eminently possible in this era of increasing global trade and colonisation. In addition, Enlightenment ideals brought an emphasis on individuals and a belief in inevitable global progress. These factors converged to create an environment from which a major missionary movement would soon arise.⁷

Baptists were at the centre of this new modern missionary movement from its beginning. In the late eighteenth century, a group of younger Baptist pastors in England’s Northamptonshire Association began questioning the High Calvinism of many Baptist leaders of the day, who asserted that believers alone were the appropriate audience for the gospel message. Convinced of the necessity of preaching to unbelievers as well, men such as Andrew Fuller and William Carey began to contemplate the necessity of global missions. In 1792 Carey published *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens*, which became the manifesto of the modern missionary movement. ‘I question whether all

⁴ David Bebbington, *Baptists through the Centuries: A History of a Global People* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010), p. 215.

⁵ The term ‘missions’ instead of ‘mission’ will be used throughout this article for consistency, as this word was the one commonly used during the modern missionary movement.

⁶ For a thoughtful overview of historical paradigms of missions, see David Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991).

⁷ For more information see Paul E. Pierson, ‘Why Did the 1800s Explode with Missions?’ *Christian History* 36 (1992) <<https://www.christianhistoryinstitute.org/magazine/article/1800s-missions/>> [accessed 18 June 2018]; Kenneth B. Mulholland ‘Moravians, Puritans, and the Modern Missionary Movement’, *Bibliotheca Sacra* 156, no. 622 (April 1999): 221-32; and Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, chapter 9.

are justified in staying here,' Carey wrote, 'while so many are perishing without means of grace in other lands.'⁸ That same year Carey, Fuller, and a few others came together to organise the Particular Baptist Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Heathen, which became known as the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS). This organisation, formed in part on the model of the overseas trading company, introduced a new paradigm for missionary work — one that was highly influential in Protestant missions efforts in the years that followed.⁹ Through missionary societies, everyday Christians contributed their money to jointly send missionaries to evangelise in lands where Christianity had not yet taken hold. The Baptist Missionary Society's first missionaries included Carey, who departed for India in 1793. The modern missionary movement had begun.

News of this remarkable venture spread throughout the Christian world, with Protestants across Europe and North America soon inspired to form additional missionary societies. In addition, Baptists not only from England but also from the United States, Canada, Australia, Wales, and beyond began contributing to the BMS to further Carey's mission. Reports of hardships and joys from far-flung mission fields captured the attention of thousands of church members, whose potential impact now reached far beyond their homelands. By the second decade of the 1800s, according to one scholar, 'the missionary cause had become the great passion' of churches in both England and the United States¹⁰ — and likely beyond.

The second national missionary society among Baptists was formed to support missionaries who had left the United States as Congregationalists, not Baptists. Adoniram and Ann Judson, along with Luther Rice, departed for India in 1812 under the auspices of the newly formed Congregationalist society, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. On their journey they became convinced of the rectitude of believer's baptism and were baptised on arrival. Rice subsequently returned to the United States to enlist Baptist support for their ministry, while the Judsons soon established their mission in Burma (present-day Myanmar). Thanks to Rice's influence, in 1814 American Baptists joined together on a national scale for the first time to form the Baptist Denomination in the United States for Foreign Missions, commonly known as the Triennial Convention. According to its first president, this group was organised 'for combining the efforts of our whole denomination, in behalf of the millions upon whom the light of

⁸ William Carey, *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians, to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens* (Leicester: Ann Ireland, 1792), p. 73.

⁹ Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 330. See also Brian Stanley, *The History of the Baptist Missionary Society, 1792-1992* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1992).

¹⁰ Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 279.

evangelic truth has never shown'.¹¹ Significantly, the first national organisation of Baptists in the United States was created with the explicit purpose of promoting foreign missions.

White male Baptist leaders in England and the United States were not the only ones who participated in this new missionary movement. In addition to Protestants of other denominations, Baptist women, Baptists of African ancestry, and Baptists from a variety of countries all set to work supporting and sending missionaries. Among Baptist women these efforts were especially strong, as those forbidden from the pulpit found acceptable leadership roles through missions work. In the United States a few Baptist and Congregationalist women formed the Boston Female Society for Missionary Purposes in 1800 — the first female missionary society in the country, with each member agreeing to donate at least \$2 a year to missions.¹² British Baptist women formed the Ladies Association for the Support of Zenana Work and Bible Women in India (later the Baptist Zenana Mission) in 1867, dedicated to sending female missionaries to serve among upper-class Indian women with whom most male contact was forbidden.¹³ In the second half of the nineteenth century several other groups of Baptist women formed their own missions societies to support and send female missionaries. Among Australian Baptists, women dominated the missionary force from the beginning, with the unmarried female pioneers to modern-day Bangladesh commemorated as the 'five barley loaves'.¹⁴ These women's efforts were part of the broader woman's missionary movement, which involved thousands of Protestant women from North America, Britain, and beyond. Notably, the two foremost leaders of this movement, Helen Barrett Montgomery and Lucy Whitehead Waterbury Peabody, were both American Baptists. Women's involvement in and leadership of missions peaked as independent women's missionary organisations were established.¹⁵ Baptist women as well as men helped lead the way in the modern missionary movement.

¹¹ Richard Furman, 'Address at the Formation of the Triennial Convention, 1814', in Joseph E. Early, *Readings in Baptist History: Four Centuries of Selected Documents* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2008), p. 80.

¹² See Helen E. Falls, 'Baptist Women in Missions Support in the Nineteenth Century', *Baptist History and Heritage* 12, no. 1 (January 1977), 26-36.

¹³ Karen E. Smith, 'Women in Cultural Captivity: British Women and the Zenana Mission', *Baptist History and Heritage* 41, no. 1 (Winter 2006), 30-41.

¹⁴ Rosalind M. Gooden, 'Pioneers, 'Barley Loaves', Jubilee Five, Evangelists, Teachers and Helps: Women in the Early Overseas Missionary Endeavor of Australian Baptists', *Baptist Recorder* 111 (August 2010), 1-15.

¹⁵ Women's missions leadership and service declined after women's organisations were merged with denominational mission boards in the early twentieth century, demonstrating the importance of 'woman's work for woman'. Still, women continued to serve cross-culturally at a higher rate than men. See, for example, Dana Robert, *American Women in Mission: A Social History of Their Thought and Practice* (Macon: GA, Mercer University Press, 1996), pp. 302-3.

Many male and female Baptist leaders, then, participated in missions by creating and supporting formal missions sending organisations. However, this was not always the case among Baptists of African ancestry, who were sometimes prohibited from such actions because of their race. In addition, some North American and Caribbean Baptists of African ancestry migrated to other regions both to spread the gospel and to avoid racially motivated violence or enslavement. Former American slave George Liele began ministering in Jamaica in 1783, before any formal Baptist missionary society had been formed. Several scholars have persuasively argued that Liele, rather than Carey, was the first Baptist missionary.¹⁶ Similarly, Liele's friend and convert David George migrated from the United States to Canada and on to Sierra Leone in 1792, preaching the gospel as he went. George established the first known Baptist presence in Africa — again before Carey's ministry began — and even convinced the Baptist Missionary Society to support his efforts for a brief time.¹⁷ Other former slaves migrated to the American colony of Liberia, where minister Lott Carey formed a Baptist church in 1822. Additional Baptist missions work in West Africa during the mid-nineteenth century was undertaken by emancipated Jamaican slaves in conjunction with the BMS¹⁸ — an early example of cooperative missions work that involved those from countries not traditionally considered missions sending areas. Even Baptists living amidst racial oppression prioritised taking the gospel to those whom they believed needed to hear it.

Indeed, Baptists from many different countries soon embarked on missionary efforts; American and British missionaries were not alone on the field. Most notable to the spread of the Baptist movement across Europe was Johann Gerhard Oncken, a German-born immigrant to Scotland who became a Baptist after studying the Bible. In the mid-nineteenth century Oncken along with two colleagues planted the first Baptist churches in many areas of Europe, including what today are the countries of Germany, Denmark, Russia, Switzerland, Sweden, Lithuania, Austria, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Romania, and the Czech Republic.¹⁹ Despite persecution, these Baptist leaders carried out extraordinarily successful missionary efforts

¹⁶ See, for example, *George Liele's Life and Legacy: An Unsung Hero*, ed. by David T. Shannon, Julia Frasier White and Deborah Bingham Van Broekhoven (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2012).

¹⁷ Robert E. Johnson, *A Global Introduction to Baptist Churches* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 198-99.

¹⁸ See Horace Russell, *The Missionary Outreach of the West Indian Church: Jamaican Baptist Missions to West Africa in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Peter Lang, 2000); and Sandy Dwayne Martin, *Black Baptists and African Missions: The Origins of a Movement, 1880-1915* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1989). For more on African American women's contributions to Baptist missions, see Ferron Okewole, "'Send Me Too': African American Baptist Women in Early Foreign Missions", *American Baptist Quarterly* 24, no. 3 (2005), 256-63.

¹⁹ See Bill Leonard, *Baptist Ways: A History* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2003), chapter 13; C. Douglas Weaver, *In Search of the New Testament Church: The Baptist Story* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2008), pp. 226-238.

among many German-speaking peoples of Europe. The worldwide missionary movement led to the beginnings of Baptist work in many European countries.

As Baptists grew in Europe and elsewhere, they continued sending missionaries to those they believed had not heard the message of salvation. Danish and German Baptist missionaries served in Africa, and in South Africa a missionary from India's Telugu Baptist Home Missionary Society worked among the Indian population beginning in 1903.²⁰ Again in this instance early missions efforts were undertaken by those more typically considered the recipients of missions activity. Baptists' missionary work was truly global. Canadian Baptists sent missionaries to Burma beginning in 1845; Australian Baptists began serving in present-day Bangladesh around two decades later; and Scottish and Irish Baptist missionaries evangelised Mexico.²¹ In addition, many European Baptists took their faith with them as they immigrated to Latin American countries such as Brazil and Chile. Other Baptists served cross-culturally not through Baptist missions agencies, but through new interdenominational faith missions organisations — such as China Inland Mission — that developed as part of the modern missionary movement.²² In fact, around half of all Australian faith missionaries were Baptist.²³ Although exact numbers are not extant, it is likely that the number of Baptist missionaries in the nineteenth century — the 'great century' of Christian missions²⁴ — was one of the largest among all Christian denominations. The modern missionary movement began with and was frequently advanced by globally minded Baptists.

The 1910 World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh, Scotland, is generally considered the ending point of the modern missionary movement. At this event more than 1200 Protestant delegates from around the world (mostly the United States and Britain) gathered to discuss global missions. A few Baptists were among the participants.²⁵ From the group's cooperation emerged the ecumenical movement of the twentieth century. In a world soon engaged in warfare and exploring new scientific theories like evolution, the idea of missions work became less popular among more liberal Western Protestants. More conservative groups such as Baptists continued and even strengthened their missionary efforts in a variety of areas throughout the

²⁰ Weaver, *New Testament Church*, p. 338.

²¹ Leonard, *Baptist Ways*, pp. 234, 251; *From Five Barley Loaves: Australian Baptists in Global Mission 1864-2010*, ed. by Tony Cupit, Ros Gooden, and Ken R. Manley (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2013).

²² Bebbington, *Baptists through the Centuries*, pp. 227-28.

²³ Rosalind Gooden, 'Five Barley Loaves: An icon for Australasian Baptist Missionary Work' <<http://www.globalinteraction.org.au/globalinteraction/media/documents/Moved/Extras%20Others/Gooden-Five-barley-loaves.pdf>> [accessed 18 June 2018]

²⁴ See Kenneth Latourette, *A History of Christianity* (New York: Harper, 1953).

²⁵ Brian R. Talbot, 'Baptists and Other Christian Churches in the First Half of the Twentieth Century', in *Interfaces: Baptists and Others*, ed. by David Bebbington (Milton Keynes, UK: Authentic Media, 2013).

world. Around mid-century, as former colonial powers gained their independence, some indigenous leaders began asking Western missions organisations to transfer their missions and institutions to national churches. This devolution occurred in various stages and with varying degrees of cooperation, eventually empowering Baptists from many parts of the world to send their own missionaries to other areas. Although the modern missionary movement ended around 1910, its effects and emphases continued to impact Baptists into the twentieth century and beyond.

Strategies

What methods did Baptists and other participants in the modern missionary movement use to advance their faith in foreign lands? How did they understand their task and the peoples among whom they worked? Twenty-first century scholars must beware of uncritically applying contemporary missiological standards to historical missions work; however, careful analysis of historical missions efforts within their context and from the long view of history can be both appropriate and helpful. Such analysis reveals both praiseworthy and dubious strategies used by participants in the modern missionary movement.

On the whole, Baptist missions methodologies did not differ greatly from those of other Protestants engaged in the modern missionary movement. Baptists' historic commitment to evangelism did ensure that Baptist missionaries prioritised conversion at least as much if not more than those of other denominations. Acclaimed Southern Baptist missionary Lottie Moon, for example, wrote that 'surely there can be no deeper joy than that of saving souls'.²⁶ In order to effect this goal, in addition to direct evangelistic endeavours, Baptist missionaries of this period engaged in educational and healthcare ministries, as well as, to a lesser degree, translation and agricultural work.²⁷

Developing schools was considered important to the missionary task, because of education's perceived role in creating future Christian leaders among the previously unreached. For example, former slave Edward Kelly was sent by a Belizean Baptist church to Corn Island, Nicaragua, around 1850. As part of his mission Kelly established the island's first school, attempting to teach the Bible to children as they learned reading, writing, and other academic skills. Locals embraced these educational efforts, to which

²⁶ Ruth Tucker, *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya: A Biographical History of Christian Missions*, 2nd edn (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004), p. 297.

²⁷ See Dana L. Robert, *Christian Mission: How Christianity Became a World Religion* (Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), pp. 48-50, for more information on Protestant missionary activities in the nineteenth century.

their children had not previously had access.²⁸ Like Kelly, Baptists serving around the world established everything from primary schools to colleges in hopes of winning children and families to Christ.

Other Baptist missionaries engaged in medical missions, especially beginning in the second half of the nineteenth century. African American Lulu Fleming, for example, became convinced of the need for medical missionaries during her service in the Congo. She returned to the United States and subsequently earned a degree from the Medical College of Pennsylvania. Fleming used her new skills as a physician to minister to both physical and spiritual needs of the people of the Congo upon her return to that country in 1895.²⁹ Other Baptist missionaries served formally or informally in medical roles, often establishing clinics or hospitals to care for the needs of local populations.³⁰ Through their compassionate service, many individuals were nursed back to health and introduced to Christ at the same time.

During the modern missionary movement some Baptists also engaged in translation and agricultural ministries. William Carey exemplified such efforts. With the help of his colleagues in Serampore, India, Carey translated all or part of the Bible into thirty-five Asian languages.³¹ Through such efforts many indigenous languages were preserved, and thousands of people read the Old and New Testaments in their own languages for the first time.³² Carey and other missionaries additionally sought to improve the lives of indigenous populations by improving methods of planting, cultivation, and food production — and at the same time introducing the people to Jesus, the bread of life. In 1820 Carey founded the Agricultural and Horticultural Society of India, and he worked for conservation and agricultural improvements throughout his ministry. Such methodologies often improved the lives of indigenous peoples, while at the same time introducing them to the gospel. They did not focus on individual souls to the exclusion of bodies and communities; instead, they appropriately recognised the interconnectedness of these things and their importance to the kingdom of God.

However, contemporary critics charge that those involved in the modern missionary movement uncritically Westernised indigenous cultures,

²⁸ George V. Pixley, 'Nicaragua Baptists: Reclaiming Repressed Cultures', *American Baptist Quarterly* 18, no. 3 (September 1999), 293-94.

²⁹ Okewole, "Send Me Too", pp. 258-59.

³⁰ See, for example, Mary Causton, *For the Healing of the Nations: The Story of British Baptist Medical Missions, 1792-1951* (London: Carey Kingsgate, 1951).

³¹ Timothy George, *Faithful Witness: The Life and Mission of William Carey* (Birmingham, AL: New Hope, 1991), p. 141.

³² See Lamin Sanneh, *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1989); and William A. Smalley, *Translation as Mission: Bible Translation in the Modern Missionary Movement* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1991).

destroying much of their unique heritage as a result. It is undeniable that many nineteenth-century missionaries conflated the goals of Christianisation and ‘civilisation’ in their ministries. In words jarring to the modern reader, William Carey wrote in his *Enquiry* that many of the world’s non-Christians were ‘in general poor, barbarous, naked pagans, as destitute of civilization, as they are of true religion’. The spread of the gospel, he concluded, would be ‘the most effectual means of their civilization’.³³ In this view, converting individuals to Christianity brought inevitable progress toward the type of ‘civilised’ society prized by Westerners, and the abandonment of what missionaries considered to be ‘heathen’ customs and superstitions. These missionaries often sought to reproduce not only the church — generally the Western model of the church — but also Western civilisation. As David Bosch put it, they ‘confused their middle-class ideals and values with the tenets of Christianity’.³⁴

Church buildings with steeples and pews in which congregations sang translated Western hymns and listened to white missionaries preach became a common sight on missions fields around the world. Today’s understanding of contextualisation had not yet developed; relatively few missionaries sought to communicate and practise Christianity in forms indigenous to local cultures. Most did not realise that the gospel is not inherently Western. From the vantage point of the twenty-first century, such methods appear triumphalist and naïve. Contemporary missionaries would do well to not emulate this aspect of the modern missions movement. However, we must acknowledge that, understood from within their own historical context, such efforts at Christianisation and civilisation were undertaken with good intentions. David Bebbington also points out that some converts appreciated missions efforts more because of the Western ideas and innovations they brought³⁵ (although today’s interpreters might wish that this had happened differently). And while many traditional customs were eradicated through missions efforts, at least some indigenous languages were preserved in the process. The modern missionary movement presents a mixed legacy.

During this period Enlightenment ideas of individual freedom along with biblical teachings about justice also led some missionaries to support human rights and denounce what they considered to be injustices among the peoples whom they served. William Carey fought against the Indian custom of immolating widows on their husbands’ funeral pyres, while fellow BMS missionary William Knibb protested the injustice of slavery in Jamaica. Caribbean Baptist missionaries to West Africa likewise sought to eliminate

³³ Carey, *An Enquiry*, pp. 63, 70.

³⁴ Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 294. Robert Johnson claimed that ‘missionaries tended to see Baptist faith and Western culture as part of the same fabric’. Johnson, *A Global Introduction*, p. 202.

³⁵ Bebbington, *Baptists through the Centuries*, p. 222.

slavery; in the years that followed, missionary Alice Seeley Harris used photography to expose atrocities carried out by colonial officials in the Congo.³⁶ Although these efforts were based in part on Western ideology, few interpreters would deny that they improved the societies among which they were undertaken. In fact, sociologist Robert Woodberry has proven through extensive research that

areas where Protestant missionaries had a significant presence in the past are on average more economically developed today, with comparatively better health, lower infant mortality, lower corruption, greater literacy, higher educational attainment (especially for women), and more robust membership in nongovernmental associations.³⁷

In Ghana, for example, where British missionaries established schools and printing presses, Woodberry noted that in 2001 the national university's library housed thousands of volumes. In the national university in neighbouring Togo, where missionaries and education had been restricted, only a handful of books were to be found.³⁸ As Woodberry's findings show, missionaries who emphasised education, healthcare, literacy, and justice passed along these priorities to their converts, with benefits lasting into the twenty-first century. Such correlations demonstrate the lasting positive impact of the modern missionary movement, although contemporary observers should not discount its negative legacy of cultural insensitivity and paternalism.³⁹

Nineteenth-century Baptist missionaries, then, used a variety of methods to transform individuals and societies, although not always in culturally sensitive ways. What else should be mentioned about their efforts? First, many missionaries of the day were more removed from the people they served than is recommended for cross-cultural workers today. The missionaries' wealth, foreign lifestyles, education levels, possible racial prejudices, and suspected ties with colonial powers, along with the physical walls of missions compounds, often separated them from the groups among whom they worked, at least from the people's perspective. In one extreme example, female Canadian Baptist missionaries serving in what is now Andhra Pradesh, India, were regarded as lower than 'untouchable' in status because of their foreignness and their refusal to acknowledge the Hindu caste

³⁶ Andrea Palpant Dilley, 'The Surprising Discovery about Those Colonialist, Proselytizing Missionaries', *Christianity Today* 58, no. 1 (January/February 2014) <<http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2014/january-february/world-missionaries-made.html>> [accessed 18 June 2018]

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ For a thoughtful contemporary evaluation of the modern missionary movement, see Frances F. Hiebert, 'Beyond a Post-Modern Critique of Modern Missions: The Nineteenth Century Revisited', *Missiology* 25, no. 3 (July 1997), 259-77.

system.⁴⁰ Close identification with indigenous women was not easy in such a context.

Once they were able to develop relationships with people in their area of service, though, most Baptist missionaries made use of native workers to further the gospel. Those indigenous peoples who had embraced Christianity often served as translators, evangelists, colporteurs, and preachers.⁴¹ One of the first missionary societies among Baptist women in the American South, in fact, was organised ‘for the support of native Bible-women belonging to the Canton [China] mission’.⁴² These indigenous workers often outnumbered missionaries, although they were typically considered the missionaries’ assistants and not missionaries in their own right. Their contributions were subordinate but significant. It is noteworthy that even in the early years of the missionary movement, indigenous leaders began spreading the gospel among their own peoples.

Baptists involved in the modern missionary movement also generally assumed terms of lifelong service through established denominational missions societies (although lack of privilege prohibited some from serving in this way). Pioneer American Baptist missionary Adoniram Judson described his missionary commitment and that of his seminary classmates as ‘*foreign missions and missions for life*’,⁴³ and formed a Baptist missionary society soon after re-examining his Congregationalist convictions and association, as described above. Such voluntary societies of necessity appealed to a number of Baptist churches and individuals for cooperative support, thus spreading knowledge about missions work and eventually recruiting additional missionaries. These early missionaries, if they survived, often spent decades of their life building the church in one specific international location. Trips to their home countries were infrequent and expensive, and communication across continents difficult. Despite these obstacles, many pioneer missionaries dedicated the majority of their lives to their missions. While most contemporary missions strategies encourage more rapid transfer of responsibilities to indigenous leadership, long-term missionaries of an earlier era are to be commended for their remarkable commitment to selfless service. As they evangelised, taught, healed, and otherwise demonstrated the gospel with the help of indigenous workers,

⁴⁰ James Elisha, ‘Canadian Baptist Mission Work among Women in Andhra, India, 1874-1924’, *Baptist History and Heritage* 41, no. 1 (Winter 2006), 42-54.

⁴¹ Bebbington, *Baptists through the Centuries*, p. 223.

⁴² Fannie E. S. Heck, *In Royal Service: The Mission Work of Southern Baptist Women* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1948), p. 94. This group, the Woman’s Mission to Woman, was officially organised in 1871 by Ann Baker Graves.

⁴³ Adoniram Judson, ‘The Missionary Call’, in *Classic Texts in Mission & World Christianity*, ed. by Norman E. Thomas (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1995), p. 65 (italics in the original).

these missionaries participated in the most significant missionary movement in Protestant history.

Legacy

Today's Baptists no longer live in the era of predominantly lifelong, denominationally based missionaries with limited communication back home. A present-day Adoniram Judson might share about his calling with his friends on social media, ask his church to purchase his plane ticket, and arrive in Asia for a six-month missions commitment a few days later, after completing a short devotion — not an extensive study of baptism — on his journey. In such a different context, what can today's missional Christians, especially Baptists, learn from the modern missionary movement? Although we no longer live in the nineteenth century, we can discover and analyse principles of missions from Baptist history that can help us better understand our heritage and improve our missions efforts in today's world.

By reviewing the legacy of the modern missionary movement, twenty-first-century Christians can be confident that Baptists have consistently been a missionary people. Since the time of William Carey Baptists have served as leaders in the missions enterprise — including the first British and American missionaries, as well as many other missions pioneers from around the world. Baptist women claimed significant leadership roles in the interdenominational woman's missionary movement, and Baptists of African descent boldly spread the gospel as part of their migrations, though not always through formal missionary societies. In addition, many of these missionaries committed their lives to serving in difficult places. While the context in which Baptists minister has changed over the centuries, missions work remains an important part of our heritage. Contemporary Baptists from a variety of backgrounds can be inspired and challenged to continue our strong involvement in missions through these historic examples.

We can also learn from the holistic ministries in which many Baptists engaged throughout the modern missionary movement, demonstrating that effective missions efforts can involve more than just direct evangelism and church planting. Historic Baptist missionaries who were engaged in education, healthcare, agriculture, and related ministries sought to share Christ's love by meeting human needs. Contemporary Baptists can emulate these types of humanitarian service, as appropriate in current contexts, without importing the belief in Western superiority that sometimes accompanied them during the nineteenth century. We might consider training missionary candidates in applied skills as well as in theology, and partnering with Christians who are meeting human needs but who have not previously been considered missionaries. Such work might prove especially

effective among unreached peoples, who often live in countries closed to formal missions work. Expanded relief efforts would also be timely in a world in which natural disasters appear to be increasing due to climate change.

Baptists can also gain inspiration from historic missionaries who emphasised advocacy and justice as important aspects of Christian ministry. Instead of focusing only on saving souls, Baptist missionaries have fought for social justice by seeking to abolish slavery, end widow burning, and stop the abuse of indigenous peoples, among many other actions. What contemporary social issues might demand similar actions from today's missional Baptists? Perhaps we should consider activism on topics such as child poverty, human trafficking, global inequality, and religious persecution. In addition, how might we work with the perseverance of missionaries such as Johann Oncken, who continued his evangelistic efforts tirelessly despite repeated persecution? Such endurance and courage are required for service in many closed countries today. Historic missionary exemplars should spur on today's Christians in our faith and encourage us to seek justice in addition to salvation for all peoples of the world.

The creative historical missions efforts of women and leaders of African descent, not always accepted as traditional missionary candidates, also remind us that Baptists' determination to obey the Great Commission can overcome obstacles that seem to stand in the way of this goal. Not all missions work has to be done through traditional denominational agencies, although this has been a common method of working in Baptist history. Might Baptist denominational organisations have something to learn from missional leaders who are on the margins of denominational life today: whether young people going overseas independently, church members who have a transformative short-term experience with a parachurch organisation, or blue-collar workers with a heart for kingdom service but without the required theological training? Could new initiatives among women and minorities empower these often neglected but able groups to serve in today's diverse world? Perhaps we should work to change the traditional missionary stereotype and expand Baptist church members' vision of what a missional Christian might look like.

Indeed, in the twenty-first century, diaspora populations provide perhaps the most significant and overlooked group of missional servants. Just as George Liele, David George, and many European Baptists migrated in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, millions of contemporary people are moving around the world today in search of health, happiness, and prosperity. And global migration is likely to increase as the twenty-first century progresses. While not usually considered formal missionaries,

diaspora Christians have tremendous opportunities to share God's love in their new contexts. In fact, they have already proved influential among peoples closed to traditional missionary work, as well as in post-Christian European contexts. Instead of lamenting the decline of some traditional missions societies, Baptists today can celebrate the many creative new ways that Christians can be on mission around the world.

The legacy of leaders such as Luther Rice likewise reminds us that over time Baptists have not been afraid to try out new structures for supporting missions. In 1790 not one Baptist group had an organisation or method for sending and supporting missionaries. Fifty years later, a number of Baptist sending entities existed. One advantage of Baptist polity is that individual Baptists and Baptist churches have the freedom to create new structures and partnerships that they believe will best advance kingdom work in today's world. How can we best empower and encourage Baptists who seek to be on mission in the twenty-first century? What might today's Triennial Convention or Baptist Missionary Society look like? Perhaps it could involve a global network of partners focused on major urban centres, or a framework of support for Baptists serving around the world through a variety of religious and secular organisations. Baptists can be proud of our history of creatively and cooperatively supporting missions efforts. Such organisations remind us that working together brings great strength; partnership is not a new but a historic Baptist idea, and one that continues to hold much promise for the future. How might a Baptist church or denomination work together with other Baptists or other Christians to engage more effectively in missions in the twenty-first century? Examples from our past encourage us to explore an innovative and cooperative future.

As we seek global partnerships, twenty-first-century Baptists should realise that the age of one-directional missions efforts is over, if it ever really existed. As this article demonstrates, it is an over-simplification to say that all Baptist missionaries traditionally came from the West. As early as the nineteenth century, Jamaican Baptists sent missionaries to West Africa, and Indian Baptists were on mission in South Africa soon afterward. In addition, indigenous workers on missions fields around the world played a crucial role in the modern missions enterprise from its beginning. Due to the success of these and other efforts of the modern missionary movement, a large number of Baptist churches now exist across every inhabited continent in our world. Indigenous workers and global migrants continue to be some of the most effective witnesses to the faith, and their efforts should be well supported. Spurred on by the faith and actions of their Baptist ancestors, Baptists across the majority and minority worlds can and must partner together to reach the 'uttermost parts of the earth'.

Finally, today's Baptists can gain insight from the tremendous success of the modern missionary movement, despite its imperfections. Although from a twenty-first-century vantage point many modern missionaries were imperialistic, culturally insensitive, or patronising, we must acknowledge that God found a way to use their efforts to bear fruit through the betterment of societies as well as the development of the global church. In fact, Baptists today are a truly worldwide body as a result of the modern missionary movement. Perhaps such insights can free contemporary missional Christians from anxieties about failure if, despite our best efforts, our missiology is not always perfectly crafted, our language skills not flawless, or our cultural understanding incomplete. Missionaries and missions sending organisations should certainly attempt to serve with excellence, but perfection is generally unattainable on this side of heaven. Today's Baptists, then, can be assured that God is able to take our feeble human efforts and imperfections and use them as part of a larger divine plan, as God has done throughout history. These words reassure and remind us that the origin and the ultimate outcomes of missions efforts, whether in the modern missionary movement or the present day, lie not with humans but with God.

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A Sociological Reflection on Canadian Baptist Mission in the Twenty-First Century

Steve McMullin

Until the latter part of the twentieth century, Canadian Baptists had placed a great deal of focus on foreign missions, while neglecting the role of mission in their local or even national context. Through their support of foreign missions and missionaries, local congregations satisfied themselves that they were carrying out their mission. In their local context, where churches assumed that the vast majority of their neighbours were at least nominal Christians, churches relied heavily on itinerant evangelists and outreach programmes to persuade people to make a Christian commitment. The twenty-first century has brought with it new realities for the church's mission: Western society is no longer even nominally Christian. A secular, digital, pluralistic, postmodern society requires a new focus on mission and changes in methodology.

Keywords

Change; Globalisation; Secularisation

Understanding Missions and Mission

The understanding of mission and the practice of mission have both changed dramatically in a single generation. As a young child growing up in eastern Canada in the 1960s, my friends and I attended the weekly 'mission band' at our local Baptist church, where the programme included the memorisation of the names and photos of every current Canadian Baptist missionary serving overseas, stories of amazing historical personalities like William Carey, Adoniram Judson, and Hannah Mariah Norris, and the collection of offerings for missions in our small cardboard 'mite boxes'. I learned at an early age that missions meant something foreign and exotic that had nothing to do with our local community, or even with the Western world. Missions was about the support of a few unusual individuals who sacrificially followed God's call to foreign lands on our behalf as Baptists.

In most Canadian Baptist churches up until at least the 1980s, the word *missions* would have been used far more frequently than the word *mission*.¹

¹ In his 1980 essay, Samuel J. Mikolaski urged Canadian Baptists to consider their mission in Canadian life, stating a new idea that 'Baptists in Canada should set about to call the nation to God'. Samuel J. Mikolaski, 'Identity and Mission', in *Baptists in Canada*, ed. by Jarold K. Zeman (Burlington: G.R. Welch, 1980), pp. 1-19 (p. 10).

Missions did not refer to something that directly involved ordinary church members or even leaders in local witness or ministry; missions was understood as a great global task that local churches should enthusiastically support with their finances and their prayers. As was true for Baptists in many parts of the world throughout the twentieth century, missions was a key aspect of identity for Canadian Baptists — the financial support of missionaries to far-off places like Angola, Bolivia, Brazil, India, Indonesia, and Zaire was a uniting factor among the four regional Baptist Conventions in Canada.²

In addition to missionary couples who left Canada to serve in foreign lands, a remarkable number of unmarried women went overseas to serve as nurses or teachers, and all of these missionaries were supported by Baptists, and especially by Baptist women, as they left home and family and the familiar to travel to far-away places to serve in mission hospitals and schools, to train local church leaders, to translate the scriptures, and to engage in evangelistic outreach. CBOMB (pronounced ‘see-bomb’), the Canadian Baptist Overseas Mission Board as it was known until the 1980s, was a Canada-wide agency that represented the combined overseas mission initiatives of the four regional conventions and served as the primary connection between local Baptist congregations and the far-away mission fields. At Baptist Convention assemblies, returning missionaries were given heroes’ welcomes and new missionaries were enthusiastically commissioned to go. Mission was understood as something that happened overseas in ways that could not be compared to the church’s witness in Canada.

At the local Baptist church level, the focus on missions often included an annual Missions Conference. Designed specifically to raise funds for overseas missions and to educate and inspire the congregation regarding the importance of foreign missions and missionaries, these meetings would typically be characterised by remarkable displays of curios from foreign lands, stories of evangelistic success, projected slides showing scenes of missionary life overseas, and opportunities for children and youth to talk with missionaries. Since at that time the vast majority of Canadian Baptists had never travelled outside of North America, one of the primary means of learning about life on other continents was through the stories of missionaries who visited local congregations while on furlough. In addition to the support from congregations that was funnelled through the convention budgets, dedicated members of local ‘Women’s Missionary Societies’ provided amazing levels of financial support and worked to ensure that the

² Harry A. Renfree, ‘The World Vision Widens’, in *Heritage and Horizon: The Baptist Story in Canada* (Mississauga: Canadian Baptist Federation, 1988), pp. 303-315.

support of missions was not neglected in the life of the local church.³ The Baptist church in which I grew up included four such WMS groups.

In the thinking of many church members, Baptist missions was not about the work of the church in the local community. It was about work that was carried out vicariously by dedicated missionary couples and individuals who chose a career of service abroad on behalf of those congregations that faithfully supported them. Familiar hymns like *We've a Story to Tell to the Nations* or *Christ for the World We Sing* were favourites at missions conferences; local congregations and their leaders could rest in the assurance that the gospel was being proclaimed, on their behalf, by the missionaries they supported.

Social Change and Secularity

At least two things in the 1980s heralded the beginning of change. First, Baptists began to notice that Canadian society was becoming more secular. The changes actually began in the 1960s or before, but because of the post-war baby boom the number of people attending Baptist churches continued to increase slightly, even though there was a substantial decline in the percentage of the growing Canadian population that was attending any church.⁴ Historically, most Canadians had always identified themselves at least nominally as Christian,⁵ and the character of Canada as a nation had been closely related to religious belief and practice,⁶ so in the thinking of most churches the only local mission for the Canadian church was to convince people to do what they already believed that they should do and make a decision to follow Jesus. It had been assumed that all but a few Canadians accepted the truth of scripture and understood the gospel; they just needed to be convinced, using arguments from the Bible, to respond positively to an invitation to make a meaningful Christian commitment.

Although it took some time for the church to notice the change in the Canadian religious landscape, the change is now obvious in many ways. Today, far fewer Canadians have received religious instruction in any church.⁷ A whole generation has grown up without any sense of their need to become Christians, which seems eerily similar to what happened to the

³ Harry A. Renfree, 'Working Women', in *Heritage and Horizon: The Baptist Story in Canada* (Mississauga: Canadian Baptist Federation, 1988), pp. 316-325.

⁴ Reginald W. Bibby, *Resilient Gods* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2017), p. 8.

⁵ Brian Clarke and Stuart Macdonald, *Leaving Christianity: Changing Allegiances in Canada since 1945* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2017).

⁶ Noted Canadian sociologist S.D. Clark wrote in 1962 that 'Canada has been, and remains, a fundamentally religious nation.' S.D. Clark, 'The Religious Influence in Canadian Society', in *The Developing Canadian Community* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962), p. 182.

⁷ Reginald W. Bibby, *Beyond the Gods and Back* (Lethbridge: Project Canada, 2011), p. 13.

Israelites after they had entered the Promised Land (Judges 2.10). Most young adults are ignorant of the theological foundations that Christians (and Western society) had taken for granted, and that generation is now raising their children with little or no reference to Christian teaching.⁸ Younger people seek spiritual answers to their questions online, and from a wide variety of questionable sources and non-Christian religious traditions.⁹ People who need to be reached with the gospel no longer take it for granted that there is a need for God, either in this life or in preparation for the next.

Although the spiritual landscape in Canada and across the Western world had been gradually changing for some time, the full realisation of that change and its implications came quite suddenly for many local congregations. In spite of the growing Canadian population, in the 1980s it was apparent that far fewer Canadians were attending church. The number of baptisms in Canadian Baptist churches (like in most denominations) was in steady decline.¹⁰ Some church leaders began to listen to people like Lesslie Newbigin who were calling churches in the West to ‘a missionary encounter with our culture’.¹¹ Such a concept of mission seemed radical and innovative.

Second, at about the same time that the reality of secularisation was beginning to be felt, the so-called church growth movement began to encourage the crafting of ‘mission statements’ for local congregations, with the term ‘mission’ being applied to local ‘people groups’ as it had previously been applied only to overseas work. Missiologists like Donald McGavran and Win Arn¹² were encouraging the application of lessons from foreign mission experiences to the witness of the church in North America. For congregations that had always seen themselves as established institutions in their nominally Christian communities, the idea of a mission statement for local church ministry to their neighbours challenged the status quo. Canadian Baptists had rarely talked of local ministry in terms of mission, except in the context of Home Mission work, which consisted mostly of the subsidisation of small rural churches that were not otherwise financially viable. In the Canadian Baptist context, the words for local church mission were ‘evangelism’ or ‘outreach’ or even ‘revival’, and those terms were closely linked to itinerant evangelists and revival meetings. A local church might schedule a week of special evangelistic meetings to provide opportunities for

⁸ Christel Manning, *Losing Our Religion: How Unaffiliated Parents Are Raising Their Children* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2015).

⁹ Christian Smith with Patricia Snell, *Souls in Transition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 293.

¹⁰ ‘The Priority of Evangelism and the Future of Our Convention’, document known as the ‘White Paper’ appended to the Minutes of the Council of the United Baptist Convention of the Atlantic Provinces, 15-17 April 1997, p. 6.

¹¹ Lesslie Newbigin, *Foolishness to the Greeks* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1986).

¹² Donald McGavran and Win Arn, *How to Grow a Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1973); Donald McGavran and Win Arn, *Ten Steps to Church Growth* (New York: HarperCollins, 1977).

unbelieving neighbours to come and hear the gospel message and respond in faith. Scheduling and publicising such campaigns emphasised both to church members and to the surrounding community that evangelism was important. Few would have considered it to be ‘mission.’

The realisation that many Canadians no longer identified themselves as Christian, and that those people seemed quite uninterested in becoming Christians, did not necessarily motivate all Baptist churches to embrace a new understanding of mission. In many cases among declining congregations it led instead to a prioritisation of congregational survival. In my sociological research among declining congregations, I have been surprised to see the extent to which mission is not a priority when a congregation is in decline.¹³ In the face of ageing members, declining membership and attendance, decaying buildings, and challenging budgets, it was often the case that congregational survival and building maintenance became the central mission of the church. The resources of these declining congregations were focused internally, with little thought about a mission to be carried out in the surrounding community. When a congregation is focused on its own survival, the motivation is not to proclaim the Good News or to care for the hurting; the motivation is to find new and younger people who will give church offerings and volunteer in church programmes. The congregation’s focus is not the salvation of the lost, but the salvation of the church!¹⁴ The maintenance of the institution becomes a substitute for the true mission of the church.

Mission in Secular Society

The understanding of mission and the practice of mission have been changing, and an important reason for that change is that the questions being asked by our society are changing as the society becomes more secular.¹⁵ In the 1970s, many ardent believers armed themselves for objections from non-Christian friends by reading volumes like those in Josh McDowell’s best-selling *Evidence that Demands a Verdict*¹⁶ series of books. In today’s increasingly secular age when many people reject the authority of the Bible, in the current pluralistic environment where Christian beliefs have no privilege over the beliefs of others, in a digital age when people can seek

¹³ Steve McMullin, ‘Social Aspects of Religious Decline’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of New Brunswick, 2011).

¹⁴ Daniel P. Smith and Mary K. Sellon, *Pathway to Renewal* (Herndon, VA: Alban Institute), p. 9.

¹⁵ Sociologist Daniel Bell defined religion as ‘a set of coherent answers to the core existential questions that confront every human group’. Daniel Bell, ‘The Return of the Sacred? The Argument for the Future of Religion’, *British Journal of Sociology* 28:4 (1977), 419-449 (p. 429).

¹⁶ Josh McDowell, *Evidence that Demands a Verdict: Historical Evidences of the Christian Faith*. (Campus Crusade for Christ, 1972).

answers online to their existential questions, and amid conditions of postmodernity where people do not link spiritual questions with rational thought, the apologetic arguments that try to defend scripture by appealing to archeological evidence or fulfilled prophecy may seem meaningless and unconvincing.

In the changed Canadian social environment where Christian mission is no longer about converting lapsed or nominal Christians into generous givers and dependable volunteers, a return to a scriptural approach to mission offers hope of a new engagement with people who are outside the church. The scriptural approach to mission is to go and make disciples (Matthew 28.19); to be the salt of the earth, the light of the world, and a town built on a hill (Matthew 5.13-14); to love God and love one's neighbours (Matthew 24.37-39); and to carry out that multifaceted biblical mission in ways that understand and empathise with the spiritual longings of a secular age, as Jesus understood and empathised with the people in his day (Matthew 9.36).

For many local churches, and for mission, that means change. It means that, instead of criticising changes in the culture from the sidelines and seeking through political means to return society to the supposedly good old days when Western nations were nominally Christian, the church that takes mission seriously, if it is to be consistent with the teaching of scripture, will engage the culture in order to bring good news to the broken world in which the church finds itself.

Unfortunately, the Christian church has often responded to secularity and pluralism in ways that are unhelpful for Christian mission. Some Christian groups (including some Baptists) have embraced the relativity of the culture, while the reaction of other Baptists to secularity and pluralism has been a fundamentalist one. As a social phenomenon, fundamentalism is the result of fear; it is a defensive posture in the face of perceived threats in a globalising world.¹⁷ When groups of Christians convince themselves that they are a persecuted minority in a globalised world, rather than motivating mission it leads to a fundamentalist desire to defend one's rights in ways that are quite unlike the attitudes of Jesus (Philippians 2.6-8) and of Paul the apostle (I Corinthians 9.1-18). When offended by certain aspects of secular society, fundamentalists demand that traditional moral and religious standards be enforced because we are 'right'. Non-Christians become adversaries; barriers between Christians and secular neighbours become even greater. The fundamentalism-fuelled mission to restore Western Christendom replaces the true biblical mission to make disciples of Jesus. Like Pharisees seeking a return to traditional ways, Christians with rules and

¹⁷ Anthony Giddens, *Runaway World* (New York: Routledge, 2003), p. 66. Giddens argues that fundamentalism is closely related to globalisation, and that, although it appears in the guise of traditional religion, it actually has little to do with religious belief.

traditions become millstones around the necks of the lost, and legalistic local churches become stumbling blocks instead of salt and light. When churches become defenders of traditional culture and morality, they tend to express prejudice against people of other religious backgrounds and judgment against people who behave or believe differently. Typically, such congregations retreat into a Christian subculture and become incapable of carrying out the biblical mission.

It is interesting that, in important ways, relativism and fundamentalism are actually somewhat similar as reactions to the changed social and religious environment.¹⁸ Both relativism and fundamentalism are rejections of the modern, rational world. Relativism is a postmodern appeal to a new and less dogmatic future where individual choice reigns supreme,¹⁹ while fundamentalism is an appeal to a traditional past. Both relativists and fundamentalists understand little of the meaning of scripture. Effective mission engagement with the culture and its existential questions causes Christians to wrestle with truth, but neither relativists nor fundamentalists are thinking in the same ways about truth. For relativists, truth can be dismissed as illusory or at least unreliable. For fundamentalists, truth must fit within unquestioned and predetermined parameters. Churches that have embraced relativism have no answers for the questions being asked in this secular age, and churches that have embraced fundamentalism have clearly articulated answers, but they are for questions no one outside of the church is asking.

Mission in a Pluralistic World

The way that the church carries out Christian mission is affected by the multi-faith society that now characterises the West. Many of the people in Western society who have not embraced the gospel may not believe that the Christian God is the true God.²⁰ Unlike the norm for much of the twentieth-century Western world, a church member's neighbours and co-workers are likely to be Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh, Jewish, or they may claim to have no religion.

¹⁸ For a more detailed discussion, see Peter L. Berger, *Between Relativism and Fundamentalism* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2009).

¹⁹ Zygmunt Bauman's concept of 'liquid modernity' (his term for postmodernity) captures the idea that 'culture is fashioned to fit individual choice and individual responsibility for that choice'. Zygmunt Bauman and Lydia Bauman, *Culture in a Liquid Modern World* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2011), p. 12.

²⁰ Joseph O. Baker and Buster G. Smith, *American Secularis* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2015), p. 1. Baker and Smith list the percentages of those in Western nations who claim to be atheists or to have 'no religion'. For example, the number in the U.S.A. jumped from 8% in 1981 to 28% in 2011. Those claiming no religion are now in the majority in nations like Australia, New Zealand, France, Spain, and Sweden.

Although people belonging to other major world religions were the focus of much successful twentieth-century mission endeavour to foreign lands, today churches in the West seem less motivated to reach out to immigrants of those faiths who now live in close proximity. Few Canadian Baptist congregations have transitioned well from the excitement of foreign missions carried out on their behalf by career missionaries to the challenge of mission to neighbours. Adherents of other religions, like ‘secular’ people, must be reached in ways that are quite different from the ways that nominal Christians were reached in the past century. As Newbiggin argued, Christians in the West need to see themselves as missionaries living in a culture that may seem increasingly foreign.²¹ That is a new reality for many churches that are not used to such thinking about Christian mission.

Many Christians view other world religions stereotypically, or they choose the worst examples of religious groups (terrorists, fanatics) and apply such caricatures to an entire religious population. That not only becomes a barrier for engaging in meaningful Christian mission to those people, but it also hurts the Christian witness to secular people who see such prejudice and who know better.

Immigrants and Christian Mission

Any focus on mission in the West must now include an intentional concern for immigrants and refugees. The rate of immigration to the West has increased and the regions of the world from which immigrants come have changed because of the economic displacements that have resulted from an increasingly global economy, and because of the growing number of refugees who are fleeing war and oppression. Most of these immigrants to the West are young adults with families, who come from areas of the world where there are relatively few Christians.²² That means that instead of being afraid of people with different religious beliefs, effective churches will seek ways to love and to welcome immigrants as part of Christian mission.

Reaching immigrants with the gospel will mean removing cultural barriers from local church life, incorporating new languages and worship styles in the life of the congregation, and being willing to turn away from the Euro-centrism that is common in many local churches in the West. Those changes can be difficult for traditional congregations, unless it is understood that the gospel is for all cultures and that Western traditions should never

²¹ Newbiggin, p. 1.

²² Bibby, 2017, p. 16.

become barriers to Christian mission.²³ If church members understand that the gospel is essential for the salvation of their neighbours, and if Christians love their neighbours as they love themselves, then Christian mission will be the priority that it needs to be in the life of the congregation. Local churches will be willing to change and to forsake unhelpful traditions, and they will have faith that God will carry out his mission – even in this secular age.

Racial/Ethnic Diversity

The crossing of racial and ethnic boundaries is an essential aspect of mission in the New Testament. For centuries, European and North American churches took that aspect of witness seriously by sending missionaries to other continents. But now, as people from other continents move to Europe and North America, many churches in the West seem to have lost their zeal for crossing racial and ethnic boundaries. Today there are unprecedented opportunities for Canadian Baptists to reach across boundaries of race and ethnicity in local communities, yet many churches resist the opportunities by trying to insulate themselves from the very people who need to hear the gospel.

The church must overcome fears and prejudices if people with different cultural and ethnic backgrounds are going to be reached with the gospel. Racism can be a problem in Christian congregations — just as it is in the wider society — and racism destroys a church's witness because it opposes the revolutionary effects of the good news (Galatians 3.28). Speaking and acting against hatred and prejudice in one's communities is part of Christian mission, and so is renouncing hatred and prejudice in the life of the congregation. At the same time, empowering people of different ethnicities by entrusting them with congregational leadership can position the congregation to reach missionally across ethnic boundaries, just as the church did in the New Testament (Acts 6.1-7).

Churches have often neglected certain groups of people, such as the economically disadvantaged, other ethnic groups, or 'people who aren't like us'. Yet in the New Testament it was the crossing of social and ethnic boundaries that especially expressed the newness and the power of the gospel message. Examples include Jesus' encounter with 'certain Greeks' (John 12.20-23), the Samaritan woman (John 4), and the Roman Centurion (Matthew 8.5-13); Peter's encounter with Cornelius (Acts 10); Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8.26-40); Paul's mention of Dionysius and Damaris in Athens (Acts 17.34); the slave girl in Philippi (Acts 16.16-18), and the

²³ For a helpful discussion about cultural barriers to the gospel, see Steven C. Hawthorne, 'The Wall and the Canyon', in Ralph Winter, *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: A Reader* (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2009), pp. 140-141.

slaves Tertius and Quartus in the same congregation as the wealthy Erastus in Corinth (Romans 16.22-24).

In the past, mission has sometimes been justly criticised for condescending attitudes toward other cultures. If the church today demonstrates a condescending attitude toward other cultures, mission will not cross boundaries as the gospel should. Such an attitude goes against Jesus' example and the teaching of the New Testament.

Ways that Mission Is Changing

The place of the congregation as a local social institution has been eroded by changes in culture and changes in technology. In this globalised twenty-first-century world, the emphasis on the individual as consumer means that there is little that is attractive about collective ritual,²⁴ hierarchical organisation and church bureaucracy, or institutional maintenance. Elaborate church buildings may be a stumbling block to mission, not only because of their cost, but also because such edifices seem irrelevant to the spiritual questions of our age. Daniel Bell argues that the bureaucratisation and institutionalisation of religion in the West makes it lifeless.²⁵ In a social environment that is characterised by individualism, the modern idea of society, and the centrality of experience, meaningful religious answers are replaced by an ultimately unsuccessful search for answers in such varied sources as rationalism, aestheticism, existentialism, civil religions, and politics.²⁶ Today, instead of mission, those very things — a focus on governance and efficiency, a programmed aesthetic experience, and a mixture of patriotism and politics — may characterise contemporary congregations.²⁷

Baptists have built institutions, and the building of those institutions may sometimes have eclipsed the Christian mission to make disciples. Mission requires faith in God; to have confidence that Jesus Christ will build his church amid an increasingly secular and religiously plural social environment requires a belief in the ability of God to continue to renew and empower his church. It requires belief in the power of the gospel (Romans 1.16). The prioritisation of mission in the life of a congregation or of a denomination during times of change also requires faith. In times of decline it is tempting to neglect faith and instead focus on maintaining organisations, buildings, and programmes.

²⁴ Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), pp. 540–41.

²⁵ Bell, p. 422.

²⁶ Bell, p. 433.

²⁷ McMullin, pp. 96–97.

Too commonly, the purpose of a church can become the maintenance of the institution, the avoidance of change or innovation, and an unwillingness to be open to the uncontrollable work of the Holy Spirit in the life and witness of the congregation that is expressed by the words of Jesus:

The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit (John 3.8).

Even the best forms of organisation can never take the place of true spiritual life. Dying churches are often well organised; they carefully follow the rules but carry out no mission.

In some ways the antidote to dead institutionalism is for Baptists to be Baptists. The historic emphasis on the priesthood of all believers combats the selfish individualism of this age by emphasising our priestly mission to others, and it also disempowers organisational structures that would value the institution over people. The priesthood of all believers also expresses a concept of personhood that challenges the consumerist understanding of personal identity that leads to isolation and anomie.

As tends to happen among religious groups, over time Baptists can forget their identity and become as institutionalised as the religious groups from which they once emerged. The church becomes mired in traditions and practices that are no longer relevant for carrying out mission. Richard Lovelace expresses what he calls ‘destructive enculturation’ in this way:

It almost inevitably appears over a period of time in which any of these dynamics [of church renewal] is substantially missing in the church. It is a kind of rust which forms on the surface of the church’s witness and clouds the glory which ought to shine out from it to illuminate the nations. At its worst, it destroys the church’s life. At best, it freezes the form of the church and produces a sanctified out-of-dateness which the world can easily learn to ignore.²⁸

For effective mission to take place, the culture of the church must continually be renewed. Baptists who maintain our non-institutional, non-conformist, free-church heritage will be well positioned for mission in the contemporary Western world.

Methodological Changes

Media and Mission

After a century of relying on itinerant evangelists and programmes to carry out mission, new twenty-first-century social and religious realities are requiring churches to re-think the ways that mission is carried out. For

²⁸ Richard Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1979), p. 197.

example, for the church to communicate effectively in a digital age it must make effective use of new technologies, including social media. To do that, churches will need to understand how media shapes and re-shapes the message and how it changes the relationship between those who proclaim the message and those who hear it. In a digitally connected age, the church is challenged to use the media effectively and wisely²⁹ to carry out Christian mission.

Digital media is more than a tool; it is the language of our connected world and it affects social identity and social relationships.³⁰ In a sense, digital technology is the language that expresses the identity of the digital generation. For mission, congregations and their leaders will need to learn to speak that language fluently, just as career missionaries took language training before embarking to foreign lands. The challenges of ‘thinking digitally’ are important for the church to consider if the gospel is going to be communicated to the generation of emerging adults. The internet (especially social networking) provides new opportunities for dialogue that would not otherwise exist.

Hospitality and Mission

A return to the kind of hospitality that was common in the New Testament is also a reality for churches that are embracing mission in their communities. That hospitality can include the opening of church members’ homes for the sake of building meaningful relationships and sharing life with those who will only respond to the gospel message if they first see Christianity being lived in authentic ways in everyday life. In a time when society is focused on privacy, opening homes to provide generous hospitality to people who are not yet Christians can provide opportunities for dialogue. The church building can also be an effective place of hospitality, but the problem is that many Baptist congregations have given such sacred status to their buildings that they refuse to allow anything but worship to take place in their ‘sanctuary’. A less institutionalised view of the local congregation can make the building a place of community and generosity, if the congregation begins by asking how the church building and property relates to the church’s mission.

²⁹ Heidi A. Campbell and Stephen Garner, *Networked Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2017), pp. 130-133.

³⁰ Heidi Campbell notes that ‘New media tools support networked forms of community, encourage experimentation with religious identity-construction and self-presentation, and promote drawing from multiple and divergent religious sources and encounters simultaneously.’ Heidi Campbell, ‘New Media and the Re-Shaping of Religious Practice’, *The Immanent Frame*, March 16, 2010 <https://tif.ssrc.org/2010/03/16/new-media-and-the-reshaping-of-religious-practice/> [accessed 12 July 2018]

Community and Mission

Community is a key aspect of mission in a secular social environment, and in a multi-religious society. Jesus said that love for one another (John 13.34-35) and unity (John 17) would be essential to the church's witness, and the Christian community was a powerful witness in the book of Acts. However, churches can follow the individualism of this age and neglect the biblical concept of community, while not seeing the importance of the corporate life of the church as an essential aspect of the church's mission. The church is more than a religion club; it is the gathering of those whose lives have been transformed by the gospel and it gathers together people who likely would have little reason to know or befriend one another in any other environment. The breaking down of cultural barriers between Jew and Gentile, male and female, slave and free in the New Testament provides the contemporary church with a powerful model for a community that carries out mission by its very existence. Perhaps Christians too often take for granted how remarkable it is that the church is a place where everyone is loved and accepted, regardless of differences.

Evangelism as the Mission of the Church

If evangelism entails more than getting some to make 'a decision' and is the mission of the church — to go and make disciples and baptise and teach them — then the life of the church (and all of its components) should be characterised by that evangelistic mission. That may threaten traditions and events and programmes that have been institutionalised but that do not contribute to the mission. It will require leadership, wisdom, patience, and grace to affirm the missional life of the church when many churches (in a 'Christian society' era) have strayed from that understanding of congregational life.

Postmodern Thinking

The society to which the church is called to be witnesses is very different from the society of thirty years ago. The culture is more secular and pluralistic, and it has been changed and is continuing to be changed by the digital revolution. Disappointment with 'modern' thinking has led to a desire for a 'postmodern' understanding.

Many Christians see postmodernity as entirely negative, but postmodern thought is only a threat if the gospel is linked to modern culture. It is not. The gospel transcends all cultures. There is hopefulness here: postmodernity is based on a quite modern analysis of modernity that shows

the spiritual bankruptcy of the modern age. The church can recognise and learn from the spiritual vitality that continues to grow and flourish in other (non-Western) parts of the world, but too often Western Christians either fear it or will not admit their need to learn from others. The church can learn from Christians in Asia, Africa, and Latin America who are applying Christian principles in their increasingly modern societies.

Responding to the Search for Meaning

While globalisation leads individuals on a search for meaning, at the same time globalisation may transform churches so that they no longer provide meaning — which requires theological depth and shared life. If churches focus on providing consumer experiences and shallow worship, but no life transformation, no challenges leading to spiritual growth, and no committed community, then people will perpetually leave, because the church is not providing the life that the gospel can provide.

In a globalised world, it has become more difficult for churches to provide identity, community, and meaning to their members. Globalisation individualises and commodifies the world, which means that the way that Christian mission is carried out matters. Congregations that individualise and commodify people have no unique message (and have deviated from the gospel).

In a secular, religiously plural, digitally informed world, mission engagement requires more theological depth than is common among many congregations today. The Christian gospel must be more than a polemic against secularity or a retreat from the challenges of the world. Mission entails respectful dialogue, understanding, and an ability to apply the truth of scripture in a world where truth is not commonly acknowledged and rarely agreed upon.

Empowering a New Generation for Mission

The changes in the social environment have made it more imperative that young and emerging adults be empowered to give leadership in carrying out the church's mission. The personal church experience of those who grew up in the twentieth century may be more of a liability than an asset when it comes to the church's mission. People today hear the gospel differently, because of the ongoing digital revolution, because of post-modernity ideas, because of the collapse of the nominally Christian society, and because the lives of young adults today are lived quite differently from the lives of previous generations of young adults.

Conclusion

Mission has changed because the world has changed. The twenty-first century has brought an awareness that mission is not about foreign lands, but about next door neighbours. Because of their distinctive characteristics, Baptists should be well positioned to carry out effective mission in the new social and religious environment, but it is requiring changes in congregational life that will ensure that mission is prioritised over church traditions. Prioritising mission means engaging as witnesses not only with those who are nominal Christians, but increasingly with those who follow other religions or follow no religion. Although proclamation of the Good News will always be important, churches have opportunities to experiment with other means of communicating the gospel by utilising media in new ways, by being hospitable, and by inviting people into community where they can engage in dialogue. To reach a new generation of adults with the gospel, churches must empower young adults in their midst to be leaders.

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Missional Implications with Baptist Expressions of the Priesthood of All Believers

John McNally

In this article, I explore how descriptions of the Baptist emphasis on the priesthood of all believers may be helping or hindering connections between ministry, mission, and spiritual gifts. After reflecting on several shorter Canadian Baptist statements on this ‘distinctive’ that are available online, I compare an affirmation in this area of Baptist identity within the European Baptist Federation. This discussion seeks to clarify expectations around the scope of the calling for every member in a Baptist congregation.

Key Words

Mutual; Missional; Ministry; Gifts; Priesthood of All Believers

Baptist Membership Expectations for Ministry and Mission?

Many years ago, I heard a fellow pastor wrestling with the level of engagement of people in his church with ministry and mission. With a mix of humorous observation and serious frustration, he quipped, “Ministers minister and congregations congregate.” This line summarised his sense that some people in his church seemed to think that he was hired to do the ministry, while members expected minimal involvement beyond worship and fellowship for themselves. It seems to be a continual challenge for congregational leaders to explore and express expectations about church membership related to ministry and mission.

Since my reflections are rooted in my Baptist context in Canada, I will examine denominational resources that are widely accessible, with the somewhat arbitrary criterion of documents that are available at no cost through denominational websites. To focus the exploration, I will look at English materials from ‘Canadian Baptists’¹ that generally describe Baptist emphases and specifically mention the priesthood of all believers. To deepen the discussion, I will interact with a range of reflections on this principle, especially from American and British sources that often seem to inform

¹ There are several Baptist denominational groups in Canada. As described in the next paragraph, I am referring to the four ‘conventions’ and unions that are affiliated with Canadian Baptist Ministries, but not covering French materials of our francophone partners within this network. For a list of these and other partners, see <<https://www.cbmin.org/our-story/who-we-work-with/>> [accessed 14 May 2018]

Canadian discussions. To broaden the analysis, I will include one significant document from the European Baptist Federation. Within this scope of study, how do Canadian Baptists express commitments to the ministry and mission of the church in relation to the concept of the priesthood of all believers?

Before beginning this discussion, it is important to clarify my Canadian context and the concept under consideration. Within my Canadian Baptist denominational context, there are four regional bodies: the Canadian Baptists of Atlantic Canada, the Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec, the Canadian Baptists of Western Canada, and the French Baptist Union (Union D'Eglises Baptistes Francophones du Canada). These four regional bodies partner together for national and international work through Canadian Baptist Ministries. While there is historical evidence about influence² from both American and British Baptists on the Canadian context, it is important to acknowledge that there are several other Baptist groups in Canada such as the Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches in Canada (arising from the fundamentalist-modernist controversies in the 1920s), the Canadian National Baptist Convention (renamed in 2008 and formerly called the Canadian Convention of Southern Baptists), the North American Baptist Conference, the Baptist General Conference, etc.

With this Canadian context in mind, this article focuses on the concept of church membership. While there are different views on membership among Baptists, I draw on Nigel Wright's view of circles of commitment and engagement:

If a local church is seen as a series of concentric circles with a very definite core both of beliefs, values and committed people, the outer circles may allow people to belong to a community while they test out their own faith commitments. As they are drawn in through a process of nurture and education, baptism marks new birth and provides a threshold into deeper engagement...As with all other aspects of the voluntarist approach to religious faith, the important dimension is that of helping people make genuinely spiritual, personally owned and lasting commitments to Christ and to his people. There is value therefore in a wider *community membership* of a local congregation allowing people in various conditions of faith and growth to know that they belong to a Christian community, with at the core a *covenant membership* of those who are ready to take full responsibility for the government and mission of the church.³

² Christopher Killacky, "Baptists" in *The Canadian Encyclopedia* online. <<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/baptists/>> [accessed 21 June 2018] For more historical background, see Harry Renfree, *Heritage and Horizon: The Baptist Story in Canada* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, reprinted in 2007). For additional background and reflection on a range of influences, see also Jarold Zeman, ed., *Costly Vision: The Baptist Pilgrimage in Canada* (Burlington: Welch Publishing, 1988).

³ Nigel Wright, *Free Church, Free State: The Positive Baptist Vision* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2005), p. 61 (italics in the original).

In this article, I will reflect generally on how we express the nature of the commitments for members at the core of church life. I will reflect specifically on how we express our commitments to the ministry and mission of the church.

Within Baptist history and polity, there are several extensive ‘emphases’⁴ that shape expectations around church membership commitments. From his widely respected writing and extended time of teaching among Canadian Baptists in Western Canada, Stanley Grenz contributed to conversations around Baptist identity. Grenz summarised these emphases or ‘distinctives’ as follows:

In all, seven convictions will come into focus, which together form an acrostic for the word BAPTIST:

Believer’s baptism

Autonomy of the local congregation within the associational framework

Primacy of Scripture

True believers only in the church

Individual competency and believer priesthood

Separation of church and state

Two ordinances.⁵

For clarity, I will concentrate on how various expressions of the Baptist emphasis on the priesthood of all believers may help or hinder church members engaging with ministry and mission.

Every Member is Called to Mutual Ministry

Within my regional Baptist body, the Canadian Baptists of Atlantic Canada (CBAC), one can find a two-page document about ‘Baptist Distinctives’ on the denominational website. This document contains the following short statement, which is the first Canadian Baptist example for examination:

The Priesthood of the Believer. Baptists hold that ALL believers share as equals in the church, and, in turn, have a priestly role toward each other. Every member is called to be a minister. Differences in education, wealth, gender and so on do not disqualify a person from service or from serving God through ministry to others.⁶

⁴ I prefer talking about ‘Baptist emphases’, rather than ‘Baptist distinctives’ as described by Stanley Grenz, *The Baptist Congregation: A Guide to Baptist Belief and Practice* (Valley Forge: Judson, 1985), p. 81.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

⁶ This description can be found on the CBAC website <http://baptist-atlantic.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Baptist_Distinctives.pdf> [accessed 10 May 2018]

This short statement supports equality and mutuality in ministry by church members. Ministry is framed as a calling for every church member, directed to one another, and opened to all people in ways that overcome common forms of discrimination. How could we expand the sentence that every member is called to be a minister, so that the statement is more sufficient in scope?

Before expanding the scope, I affirm what this statement does convey clearly. Support for mutual ministry seems consistent with the New Testament foundations of the priesthood of all believers. Passages like reflections on the royal priesthood in I Peter 2.4-10, the call to lovingly support one another in Romans 12.9-13, and many ‘one another’ verses in the New Testament come to mind. Reflecting on the I Peter 2 passage, Maring and Hudson summarise the New Testament teaching in this way: ‘The idea of the priesthood of all believers, therefore, might be more aptly expressed as the mutual ministry of all believers.’⁷

In the online document on Baptist beliefs used in Western Canada, which is the second Canadian Baptist example for examination, we find the same emphasis on mutual ministry and equality, with slightly different wording:

Priesthood of All Believers. Loved by God, and made in His image, each of us has the opportunity to meet directly and personally with God. As we are all equal before Him, we have the right and responsibility to participate in Christ’s body, the Church, and to minister to each other as a ‘priesthood of all believers’. We have ordained ministers who perform those functions, such as marriages, that are reserved for licensed clergy by law or tradition.⁸

It is noteworthy that this statement includes an allusion to the Baptist concept of soul competency⁹ and a brief description of pastoral responsibility. It is beyond the scope of this article to explore the implications of being a ‘A Kingdom of Priests’¹⁰ for church governance or to have a well-rounded discussion of ‘A Baptist Doctrine of Ministry’.¹¹ A fuller statement on the priesthood of all believers needs to consider if and how to increase clarity around both being equal before God and having some ‘ordained’¹² and ‘reserved’ functions within the church.

⁷ Norman H. Maring and Winthrop S. Hudson, *A Baptist Manual of Polity and Practice* (Valley Forge: Judson, rev. edn, 1997), p. 102.

⁸ <<https://cbwc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/CBWC-Baptist-beliefs.pdf>> [accessed 10 May 2018]

⁹ Within the CBAC online document on distinctives, soul competency is described with several sentences as a separate point. See <http://baptist-atlantic.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Baptist_Distinctives.pdf> [accessed 10 May 2018]

¹⁰ See Nigel Wright, pp. 115-137; Paul Fiddes, *Tracks and Traces: Baptist Identity in Church and Theology* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2003), pp. 83-88.

¹¹ See Paul Fiddes, pp. 83-106; Nigel Wright, pp. 159-182.

¹² For an insightful discussion of ‘call and ordination’ related to the priesthood of all believers and other biblical and theological foundations, see Greg Ogden, *Unfinished Business: Returning the Ministry to the People of God* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, rev. edn, 2003). For a shorter Baptist discussion of similar topics,

Let me return to the brief mention in the denominational statements above about a ‘priestly role toward each other’, or similar language, and their implicit potential to encourage mutual ministry within small group settings. A range of resources on cultivating small group ministry either have direct discussions of the implications of ‘one another’¹³ passages in Scripture and in church history,¹⁴ or integrate the practices¹⁵ of mutual ministry throughout the resource. To this extensive evidence in biblical, historical, and practical areas, it seems both sound and strategic to emphasise the mutual ministry implications of the priesthood of all believers within small groups and other ways of ‘learning and growing in community’.¹⁶ Therefore, it seems wise to make more explicit connections with mutual ministry in statements about the priesthood of all believers.

Emphasising the priority of mutual ministry could also be a safeguard against a consumer mentality. As a Canadian Baptist leader seeking to write a missional theology for his context and beyond, Gary Nelson notes a common misunderstanding of church:

Perhaps the most dangerous aspect of the non-borderland understanding of doing church is treating church members as if they are volunteers rather than disciples. This framework treats church participants as customers to be assimilated into the institution’s life. Treating church members as customers can result in the creation of a consumer mentality in the church that ultimately works against calling people to a discipleship frame as faithful followers of Christ. It can result in a discipleship that is comfortable and convenient.¹⁷

If comfort, convenience, and consumer satisfaction become normative standards for volunteers, then members can easily see themselves as customers of spiritual services, even if they volunteer to help provide some of those services. From the congregational level, the goal of individual

see Study and Research Division, Baptist World Alliance, *We Baptists* (Franklin: Providence House, 1999), pp. 28-30, 62-75.

¹³ Diana Curren Bennet, *Renewing Your Church Through Healthy Small Groups* (Lexington: Leadership Transformations Inc. Publications, 2016), pp. 15-38. See the interactive group exercise on such passages in Julie Gorman, *Community That Is Christian: A Handbook on Small Groups* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2nd edn, 2002), pp. 40-41.

¹⁴ The roots of Baptist covenantal ways of ‘walking together’ are diverse and debatable. See Paul Fiddes, pp. 21-47; Nigel Wright, pp. 31-39. Regardless of this diversity, there seems to be historical unity around small group practices in movements related to Baptist roots. See Joel Comiskey, *2000 Years of Small Groups: A history of cell ministry in the church* (Moreno Valley: CCS Publishing, 2015).

¹⁵ Ruth Haley Barton, *Life Together in Christ: Experiencing Transformation in Community* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2014); M. Scott Boren, *Leading Small Groups in the Way of Jesus* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2015); Heather Zempel, *Community Is Messy: The Perils and Promise of Small Group Ministry* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2012).

¹⁶ This phrase is the fourth characteristic of congregational vitality in the research of Stephen Macchia, *Becoming a Healthy Church: 10 Traits of Vital Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), pp. 77ff. Beyond resources on healthy small groups, some research on church health highlights healthy small groups as an essential part of congregational vitality. See Christian Schwarz, *Natural Church Development* (St. Charles: Church Smart Resources, rev. edn, 2006), pp. 34-35.

¹⁷ Gary Nelson, *Borderland Churches: A Congregation’s Introduction to Missional Living* (St. Louis: Chalice, 2008), pp. 139-140.

transformation of disciples can easily be reduced to the desire for institutional assimilation of customers. Emphasising mutual ministry as part of the priesthood of all believers might help counteract this cultural tendency to a consumer mentality.

This counteracting message of the priority of mutuality in ministry can help nuance the voluntary side of Baptist identity. William Brackney, who had leadership and teaching roles at McMaster Divinity College in Ontario and then at Acadia Divinity College in Nova Scotia and now at Carey Hall in British Columbia, begins a chapter on this important theme: *Voluntarism and the Independence of the Local Congregation*. ‘The voluntary principle lies at the heart of Baptist identity. By voluntarism is meant that which proceeds from one’s will with one’s full consent’.¹⁸ I wonder if this voluntary emphasis in ecclesiology for Baptists may be misunderstood or misrepresented as a gathering of volunteers rather than a body of disciples reaching out to the wider world. In this same book, which was a required text in Baptist history and polity classes for several years at Acadia, Brackney describes the ‘the missionary imperative’¹⁹ as another core principle. How often does our terminology reveal our mentality if we maximise efforts for recruiting and retaining volunteers and minimise membership commitments to missionary attitudes and actions?

Every Member is Called to Mutual and Missional Ministry

From my experience, it seems common in Canadian Baptist churches to commission volunteers to start a new season of ministry or hold volunteer appreciation events. While this desire to support different ministries seems commendable, such rituals may sabotage a robust understanding of the priesthood of all believers with a volunteer customer mentality. Nelson notes an ‘aha’ insight around this idea that he had in the middle of a commissioning time:

Teachers in mid-week ministry to children were affirmed, but faithful teachers in the public school from Monday to Friday were missed. Participation on committees and councils within the church were recognized, while salt-and-light businesspeople went unnoticed...My epiphany happened one Sunday when, in the middle of this commissioning ritual, I realized how destructive this exclusionary ritual really was. I was horrified...Turning to the congregation, I apologized for my blindness and spontaneously invited any who felt a specific call to faithfully live as disciples of Christ in the places in which they worked and lived, to come forward and join the others for a prayer of commissioning. A coach of a boy’s hockey team, a lawyer, and a baker were only some of those who came forward

¹⁸ William Brackney, *A Capsule History of Baptist Principles* (Atlanta: Baptist History and Heritage Society, 2009), p. 53.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 79-84. Within this chapter, Brackney portrays this as one of the primary principles of Baptists.

that day...I have never forgotten that sacred moment because that day I learned about rituals and the potential they have to cultivate missional values and purpose.”²⁰

Do you have an epiphany example of realising the difference between commissioning volunteers and praying for both mutual and missional ministry?

When a seminary student reflected with me on this story, she realised that she had been commissioned repeatedly for internal ministry within the church but never in her external role as a volunteer fire fighter. A few Sundays after this conversation, I was preaching at the church where she was doing her ministry field placement. In response to our reflections, we integrated a commissioning for missional ministry as part of the response to the message on living out faith at work and other forms of external service in the surrounding community. For several people who came forward for prayer that Sunday, it was a first-time affirmation of missional ministry beyond the church walls to go along with past affirmations of internal, mutual ministry. How often do we miss opportunities to pray²¹ for covenantal commitments to ministry that are both mutual and missional?

I raise this question with sadness, when I see how the CBAC online document neither mentions the Baptist emphasis on mission as a separate point, nor integrates the importance of mission into the description of the priesthood of all believers. To be fair to my fellow Atlantic Canadian Baptists, many of us, myself included, have developed or used other materials in preparing those considering accepting Christ, being baptised, and joining the church. For example, John Bartol’s materials are used widely enough within our region to warrant a revised edition with a chapter on ‘The Biblical Distinctives of Baptists’ containing a longer statement on ‘Priesthood of All Believers’ that includes descriptions of soul competency, pastoral responsibility and gifts for ministry, and adds another distinctive about the priority of ‘Evangelism and World Mission’.²² Baptist introductions to identity and polity as a church provide opportunities to highlight how mission is not something church members delegate to others elsewhere, but rather mission²³ is something in which all can participate locally and globally.

²⁰ Nelson, p. 103.

²¹ Darren Cronshaw, *Dangerous Prayer: Discovering a missional spirituality in the Lord’s Prayer* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2017). This book helps counteract the tendency for prayer to be personal and mutual, but not missional.

²² John Bartol, *Life in Christ, A New Relationship: Studies for Membership Classes or Small Groups* (Saint John: Atlantic Baptist Mission Board, rev. edn, 2003), pp. 65-67.

²³ For an insightful summary of the ‘new missions consensus’ and connections with Christian formation, see the chapter on ‘Formed into Mission’ in Evan Howard, *A Guide to Christian Spiritual Formation: How Scripture, Spirit, Community, and Mission Shape Our Souls* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018), pp. 193-210.

After mentioning mutual ministry, Maring and Hudson also extend the discussion to mission as an implication of the priesthood of all believers:

Members serve God in a great variety of ways, and all of these are part of the ministry of the church to the world in the name of Christ. The ministry of the church members is largely carried on in the home, factory, office, classroom, boardrooms, legislative hall—wherever people live and work. Christians are missionaries on the frontiers between church and the world, trying to influence the private and public institutions that condition their lives—advocating such causes as stewardship of natural resources, protection of the environment, respect for human rights, and the search for ways to peace and justice.²⁴

For this discussion, I use the word ‘missional’ to summarise the breadth of this outward orientation described above with less of the baggage, both positive and negative, associated with the term ‘missionaries’. The terminology of mission or missional seems to me to be more specific and suggestive than the more generic wording of service.

After reflecting on implications of the priesthood of all believers, R. Stanton Norman mentions service and then frames the overall intention of the priesthood of all believers in terms of mission:

The church as a priesthood means that the congregation jointly seeks and discerns God’s will for corporate mission. The ultimate goal of the priesthood is the joint service of all believers in unified mission to a lost world.²⁵

Such communal, mutual, and missional expressions of the priesthood of all believers may help guard against individualistic and irresponsible interpretations, since ‘misunderstandings of this doctrine abound in Baptist life’.²⁶ Perhaps more substantial statements on the priesthood of all believers can help address superficial or even suspect interpretations of this Baptist emphasis by ensuring that both inward and outward implications are covered.

In my opinion, Romans 12 is one of the most helpful biblical foundations for such connections because it gives a catalytic combination of inward and outward orientation throughout the chapter. John Stott’s exegetical insight about Romans 12.10-13 clarifies connections:

If generosity is shown to the needy, hospitality is shown to visitors. *Philadelphia* (love of sisters and brothers) has to be balanced by *philoxenia* (love of strangers). Both are indispensable expressions of love.²⁷

²⁴ Maring and Hudson, p. 103.

²⁵ R. Stanton Norman, *The Baptist Way: Distinctives of a Baptist Church* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2005), p. 99.

²⁶ For further examples of some common misunderstandings of the priesthood all believers, see *Ibid.*, pp. 97 ff.

²⁷ John Stott, *Romans* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1994), p. 332.

From this perspective, the priesthood of all believers can be framed as combining the mutual love of sisters and brothers and the missional love of strangers.

The apostle Paul shifts his discussion in Romans 12 from building up the body to reaching out in the community. These instructions go back and forth in the chapter between internal and external implications, as Paul describes ‘the way Christians should live with others, both fellow Christians and others’.²⁸ Fresh descriptions of the priesthood of all believers have potential to picture a more integrated combination of both mutual and missional attitudes and activities that go beyond categories of insiders and outsiders.

Before returning to the prior discussion of spiritual gifts, let me share the statement on ‘The Priesthood of All Believers’ on the website of the Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec, which is the third Canadian Baptist example for examination:

The Bible affirms the value of each person as having been created in the image of God, and also declares each person morally responsible for his/her own nature and behaviour. Baptists believe that inherent in the worth of each person is also the right and competency of each individual personally to deal directly with God through Jesus Christ. This principle also suggests our responsibility to serve other believers in intercession and nurture: we are priests to each other. Baptists believe that no group or individual has any right to compel others—forcefully or politically—to believe or worship as they do. Rather, Baptists have historically been champions of **religious liberty**.²⁹

While the statement does not make explicit connections to the missional mindset in emphasising the Kingdom of God and using gifts for others, subsequent discussion questions do address these areas. This statement covers the ground noted earlier in areas of equality, soul competency, and mutual ministry, along with highlighting the importance of religious liberty³⁰ that avoids compelling others to believe.

²⁸ James Dunn, *Romans: A Guide for Reflection and Prayer* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2001, reprinted 2007), p. 153.

²⁹ This sixteen-page document, *Why Baptist? A Tool for CBOQ Exploring Their Unique Baptist Identity in 21st Century Central Canada* (Etobicoke: Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec, no date), can be found through the following link: <<https://baptist.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Why-Baptist-17-09-05-.pdf>> The additional questions quoted here are found on the document, but not on the initial web page. [accessed 10 May 2018]

³⁰ For more extensive information around how the priesthood of all believers is emphasised, along with the importance of religious liberty, see the fifty-two-page student guide available online, *Baptist History and Identity: An Elective Course for Local Churches Teaching Baptist Identity Student Guide*, (Etobicoke: Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec, 2018). There is also an accompanying forty-eight-page *Leaders Guide* for this tool, which can be accessed through the same webpage: <<https://baptist.ca/about/what-do-baptists-believe/>> [accessed 10 May 2018]

Within the wide-ranging interpretations and implications of religious liberty³¹ in Baptist thought, one can make clear connections to mission. In his chapter, 'Mission and Liberty: A Baptist Connection', Fiddes concludes,

Mission, then, is the essence of the church. It is through sharing in God's own mission and God's own freedom that the church becomes one, holy, catholic and apostolic. Mission in freedom is as fundamental to the church as outward-going, self-giving love. Indeed, they are the same reality. It is in mission that the church can follow the traces of a generous God who has gone on ahead, into the future that is promised to the whole of creation.³²

From this perspective, freedom helps with motivation and mobilisation for mission, because it invites collaboration with the generous freedom of the character and activity of our Triune God.

In addition to the astute analysis by Fiddes, it is fascinating that, within my region of Canada, the sense of collaborative adventure in joining God on mission has been envisioned by leadership within the CBAC Youth and Family Department with their experiential equipping tool, *Neighbourhood Assessment Workbook*.³³ Their winsome description of incarnation is an inspirational call to missional engagement with a sense of adventure from Scripture. How might such fresh inspiration be integrated into our expressions of the priesthood of all believers that freely overflow into mission?

Every Member is Gifted and Called to Mutual and Missional Ministry

While there are many possible answers to this question, I make a case for spiritual gift development as a crucial component of mobilising mutual and missional ministry in collaboration with the Trinity. If one sees the prominent place of spiritual gifts flowing into mutual and missional ministry within Romans 12, then such infrequent engagement with this principle in recent Canadian Baptist documents available online seems inconsistent or insufficient.

In contrast, William Jones, who served as a pastor in several churches in Ontario and for twelve years as the editor of the *The Canadian Baptist* magazine (no longer in publication), wrote a book that received

³¹ See Nigel Wright for an exploration of many facets of this concept. In contrast, Norman cautions against confusing these terms: 'Although soul competency, religious liberty, and the priesthood of all believers are interrelated, they are not identical concepts.' Norman, p. 98. In refining explanations of the priesthood of all believers, one has to wrestle with how to express potential connections with other Baptist emphases.

³² Fiddes, p. 273.

³³ The *Neighbourhood Assessment Workbook* is available for download through this webpage: <<http://cbacyf.ca/naw>> Unfortunately, this very helpful resource is somewhat 'buried' in a departmental webpage, rather than listed on the main menu of resources provided by the CBAC. [accessed 14 May 2018]

endorsements from Canadian Baptist leaders in various parts of Canada. In his few pages on the priesthood of all believers, he writes:

This is another way of saying that every Christian has a ministry, both to other believers, and to the wayward world...To meet the challenge of being priests to the world, God has given the members of his body—the church—gifts appropriate to the requirements of priesthood and ministry...This list of gifts indicates the way in which the Spirit of God endows his priests for ministry. By using these gifts, the individual members of the church bring both themselves and a lost world nearer to God.³⁴

It is significant that this description is a combination of both mutual and missional ministry with spiritual gifts as ‘the way in which the Spirit of God endows his priests for ministry’. This resource portrays spiritual gifts as vital elements of ministry empowerment both inwardly and outwardly. It is also significant that this resource is no longer in circulation, with nothing similar seemingly emerging to take its place on a national level. Maybe there is a need for a fresh articulation of Baptist emphases that can build consensus across the four regional bodies in our Canadian Baptist context. Maybe the brevity of online statements lessens clarity in the concept of the priesthood of all believers.

For greater clarity of connections within denominational affirmations with ongoing circulation, I turn to European Baptist sisters and brothers in Christ. The statement in this document on the priesthood of all believers is expressed in four paragraphs, the first of which is quoted below as the fourth Baptist example for examination in comparison to the Canadian content discussed above. I also quote a few additional lines to give a sense of how they seek to clarify the role of spiritual leadership within churches.

8. We affirm the ‘priesthood of all believers’, in which all members of the church are called to ministry; some among them called to exercise spiritual leadership, which is always to be understood as serving. Baptists hold that all believers are called to serve Christ in his church and in the world, and that for this task the Holy Spirit distributes gifts to the whole people of God. They expect to find a whole range of spiritual gifts in a local church, with members exercising variously such gifts as teaching, evangelism, pastoring, guiding, serving, prophetic insight, knowledge, praying, healing, administration and hospitality. These ministries are both for the building up of the church and for the bringing of healing and reconciliation into every area of daily life and work...Baptists also believe, however, that Christ calls some to exercise a ministry of spiritual leadership, with particular responsibilities for preaching, teaching, and pastoral care.³⁵

³⁴ William Jones, *What Canadian Baptists Believe* (Etobicoke: ChiRho Communications, rev. edn, 1989), pp. 9-11.

³⁵ While this statement is now over twenty-five years old, it is still widely accessible online. For example, it can be downloaded from the Baptist Union of Great Britain website as one of the resources on ‘Being a Baptist: Who we are’: < https://www.baptist.org.uk/Groups/220863/Who_we_are.aspx > entitled: ‘What are Baptists? On the way to expressing Baptist identity in a changing Europe: a study paper issued by the

How refreshing to see this expression of the priesthood of all believers creatively and clearly combining ministry in the church and in the world, for helping and for healing, all empowered through the gifts of the Spirit and equipped by spiritual leaders in the church. This statement addresses some of the limitations noted in the prior discussion of recent, shorter Canadian Baptist statements and clarifies the role of spiritual gifts in ministry.

Within my denominational context, our younger leaders are helping champion a similar creative combination. Part of the reflection around joining God on mission is an invitation to gift identification and mobilisation for mission.

1. What strengths/gifts do your church members/adherents (or group) have? In particular try to name the gifts that are unique to your church (or group) and the people God has added to your numbers. Not every church is gifted in the same areas.
2. As you look over the list, does God seem to have disproportionately gifted you in a particular area?
3. Brainstorm as many ideas (even wild ones) of how your church (or group) might use your gifts to bless the community? Notice, we didn't say to bless the church, we said to bless your community outside the walls of your church.³⁶

After recognising the potential of spiritual gifts for impacting the community, this resource raises questions for discerning to which community needs God is calling the church to respond in alignment with giftedness and relational connections.³⁷ While the concept of the priesthood of all believers is not explicit, these invitations to reflection and action seem consistent with the description of this doctrine within this article.

While there is a significant amount of material about the development of spiritual gifts³⁸ for ministry, it is pertinent for this article to consider briefly how this topic relates to an emphasis on the priesthood of all believers. First, while there may be a cultural tendency to view gifts and strengths for personal fulfillment and institutional development, a well-rounded view of the priesthood of all believers encompasses both mutual and

Division for Theology and Education of the European Baptist Federation (1993)', pp. 7-8. [accessed 10 May 2018]

³⁶ *Neighbourhood Assessment Workbook*, p. 22. [accessed 14 May 2018]

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25.

³⁸ In addition to the books in this section, I find the following resources and the related materials helpful for the practice of 'gift-based ministry': Christian Schwarz, *The 3 Colors of Ministry: A Trinitarian approach to identifying and developing your spiritual gifts* (St. Charles: Church Smart, 2001); Kevin Brennfleck and Kay Marie Brennfleck, *Live Your Calling: A Practical Guide to Finding and Fulfilling Your Mission In Life* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004); Jane Kise, David Stark and Sandra Krebs Hirsh, *Life Keys: Discover Who You Are* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2nd edn, 2005); Erik Rees, *SHAPE: Finding & Fulfilling Your Unique Purpose For Life* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006); Os Guinness, *The Call: Finding and Fulfilling the Central Purpose of Your Life* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, rev. edn, 2003). I first wrote about the significance and interdependence of gifts, groups, and missional ministry in my Doctor of Ministry Thesis, within which some of the sources and insights for this article can be found.

missional ministry. As Fiddes writes, ‘Everyone has a *charismata*, not to fulfill himself or herself, not for mutual satisfaction and good experiences..., but in order to make Christ visible in ministry to the world around.’³⁹ From this perspective, gifts are not ends in themselves, but rather means for enriching the church and empowering outreach. Fiddes continues,

In the Apostle Paul’s view of the church, all its members, as limbs of the body of Christ, were expected to exercise spiritual gifts of ministry; these *charismata* might appear to be unusual (such as healing and prophecy) or quite ordinary (such as hospitality and generous giving) but all were gifts of the Spirit for building up the church in its mission to the world.⁴⁰

In short, in a healthy church body every member discovers how they are gifted for supporting the church and serving in mission.

Second, spiritual gifts interface with the priesthood of all believers in pastors’ roles in mobilising gifts for mission. Fiddes describes this dynamic:

...the minister can proclaim the word of God into the local situation in which the church finds itself, and can call that community to take its place in the wider mission of the church in the world today. All that the minister does, in teaching or in pastoral care, is from the perspective of the universal church as the whole body of Christ, and so widens the vision of those on the local scene. From this standpoint he or she enables and coordinates the spiritual gifts of others, and leads a team ministry with the deacons.⁴¹

From this perspective, ministry is presented as local and missional as pastoral leaders support gift discovery, development, and deployment within team ministry for congregational vitality that overflows to our hurting world. While such leadership may not be unique to pastors, they seem uniquely equipped and empowered to equip and empower others for clarifying their calling in contributing to Christ’s kingdom.

Third, linking communal spiritual gifts and the priesthood of all believers can help counteract a ‘very individualistic concept of our responsibility’⁴² in evangelism and mission that may leave us feeling guilty and weary.

The crucial step is helping people identify their gift and see how they can contribute to the witness of their Christian community, letting the Holy Spirit use them in their area of gifting...Following are the areas of gifting, taken from Scripture and experience, that God seems to love to use to reach our world in teamwork for corporate witness. 1. Organizing and leading...2. Evangelism and equipping...3. Hospitality and encouragement...4. Pastoring and teaching...5.

³⁹ Fiddes, p. 67.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 88.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 90.

⁴² Rick Richardson, *Reimagining Evangelism: Inviting Friends on a Spiritual Journey* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2006), p. 55.

Prayer, words and works from the Holy Spirit...6. Service and mercy...7. Giving...⁴³

This quotation illustrates how specific spiritual gifts can be oriented toward outreach with communal co-operation instead of individual isolation. Within his explanation of this pivotal point, Richardson comments,

If the church could grasp the way God wants to use the whole community to reach people through the gifts God has given, our pictures and practices of evangelism would be transformed and people would be set free.⁴⁴

Within this article, I make a case for recovering and reframing the Baptist emphasis on the priesthood of all believers in transformative and liberating ways, as the gifts given to all God's people are mobilised for internal formation and external mission.

A denominational description of Baptist distinctives within my region of Canada states, 'Every member is called to be a minister.' Such a statement is not sufficient, because it does not convey the combination of inward and outward implications of the Baptist emphasis on the priesthood of all believers empowered by the gifts of the Spirit. As part of fuller statements on the priesthood of all believers, it would be wiser to say that every member is gifted and called to mutual and missional ministry.

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⁴³ Ibid., pp. 58-61. While this quotation addresses evangelism, it applies more generally to missional ministry.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 58.

Integral Mission ‘At the Car Wash’: Facing the Challenges of Post-Odebrecht South America

Daniel Clark

In recent years South American countries have been rocked by the scandals emerging from the *Lava Jato* (Car Wash) Investigation and the practices of the Brazilian construction company Odebrecht. These scandals have toppled or weakened various left-wing governments in the region and resulted in a socio-political environment which is less receptive to an integral approach to the mission of the church. This article provides missiological reflection on the significance of these scandals for advocates of integral mission, focusing on the need for more effective engagement with local churches and a clearer articulation of what churches should expect to achieve in their social engagement. It suggests that there is a need for a humbler, more market-friendly advocacy of integral mission to emerge.

Key Words

Integral Mission; South America; Social engagement

Introduction

As a Brazilian living in Lima, Peru, I am often asked about two subjects: football and political corruption. The corruption scandals associated with *Operação Lava Jato* (Car Wash Investigation) and the Brazilian construction company Odebrecht have become common topics of conversation for many South Americans. Nonetheless, there has been little theological reflection on the impact of these scandals, even by those who advocate an integral approach to mission, which has as one of its concerns the relationship between churches and society.

This article suggests that the current context in South America, post-Odebrecht, presents significant challenges to those who wish to articulate an integral approach to mission, challenges which have yet to be faced successfully. However, to understand these challenges it is necessary to define integral mission in the South American context.

Integral Mission in the South American Context

Definitions of integral mission are arguably clearer on what they reject, rather than what they affirm. A common theme is the rejection both of attempts to reduce the mission of the church to verbal proclamation and to eschew evangelism in favour of social transformation and humanisation. The Micah Network, which presents itself as ‘a **global** community of Christians ... drawn together because of their passion for integral mission’,¹ affirms:

Integral mission or holistic transformation is the proclamation and demonstration of the gospel. It is not simply that evangelism and social involvement are to be done alongside each other. Rather, in integral mission our proclamation has social consequences as we call people to love and repentance in all areas of life. And our social involvement has evangelistic consequences as we bear witness to the transforming grace of Jesus Christ.²

Despite these global aspirations, the definition is framed to solve a problem emerging from Western theological and missiological practice. In regarding evangelism and social action as distinct elements, it still allows the possibility of social action to be regarded as a secondary action, subordinate to verbal proclamation.³ As it is focused on activities, there is little explanation concerning how integral mission is relevant in contexts where either open proclamation of the gospel or social involvement are not possible. Vinoth Ramachandra offers a useful corrective by shifting the focus away from what the church does to what it is. Integral mission is a ‘way of calling the church to keep together, what the Triune God of the Biblical narrative always brings together’,⁴ thus refusing to draw artificial distinctions between proclamation and social action.

The use of the term ‘integral’ in South America draws on the image of wholemeal bread (*pan integral*) to affirm that the mission of the church cannot be broken down into separate components, such as proclamation and action.⁵ In South America this affirmation of the integral nature of the church’s mission has a strong Christological component. The incarnation points to God’s willingness to step into the suffering and poverty of the world and becomes a model for the ministry of the church. Jesus’ ministry was one

¹ Micah Network, ‘Who we are’, *Micah Network* <<http://www.micahnetwork.org/who-we-are>> [accessed 31 January 2018] (bold in the original).

² Micah Network, ‘Integral Mission’, *Micah Network* <<http://www.micahnetwork.org/integral-mission>> [accessed 05 November 2015]

³ C. René Padilla, ‘The Future of the Lausanne Movement’, *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 35.2 (2011), 87–88 (p. 88).

⁴ Vinoth Ramachandra, ‘What is Integral Mission?’, *Micah Network* <http://www.micahnetwork.org/sites/default/files/doc/library/whatisintegralmission_imi-the-001.pdf> [accessed 02 February 2018] p. 1.

⁵ David Kirkpatrick, ‘C. René Padilla: Integral Mission and the Reshaping of Global Evangelism’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2015), p. 44. Other terms which are used include ‘holistic’ and ‘transformative’. Kirkpatrick indicates that Padilla, who coined the expression *misión integral*, initially used different English concepts in translation.

in which verbal proclamation and works of compassion and mercy were inseparable, and his emphasis on the Kingdom of God points to his Lordship over all aspects of creation and human life, denying the reduction of mission to a quest for converts.⁶

For much of the twentieth century evangelical Christians in South America retreated from social action to focus solely on the verbal proclamation of the gospel, in contrast to the late nineteenth-century missionary strategy of using social action, especially educational and medical projects, as a gateway to evangelism. This was partly a consequence of the reluctance of many mainstream protestant denominations to regard South America as a mission field, due to its Catholic heritage, so that missionaries came primarily from theologically conservative denominations and faith missions.⁷ These missionaries adopted a dispensational eschatology in which the involvement of the church in social issues was considered a distraction from the urgent task of evangelising individuals. Fears regarding the global spread of communism accentuated this suspicion towards social action, as did developments within the World Council of Churches, in which the mission of the church was reduced to humanisation and the uniqueness of Christ was underplayed.⁸

Different factors coalesced in the second half of the twentieth century to encourage the emergence of the concept of integral mission. The slow transfer of power from missionaries to indigenous leaders in many denominations encouraged Latin American theologians to gather together in response. Missionary domination of the first Latin American evangelism congress (CLADE 1) in 1969 led to a meeting of indigenous theologians the subsequent year in Cochabamba, Bolivia, through which the Latin American Theological Fraternity (FTL) was born, which would become a major promoter of integral mission.⁹ The endemic poverty in most Latin American countries and the spread of military dictatorships supported by the United States in the 1960s and 1970s encouraged a desire for a contextual reading of Scripture, which became accentuated with the growing concern of the Roman Catholic Church with the plight of the poor, expressed in the Base

⁶ Michael Clawson, 'Misión Integral and Progressive Evangelicalism: The Latin American Influence on the North American Emerging Church', *Religions* 3 (2012), 790–807 (p.792). Escobar articulates a relevant Christology for the Latin American in Samuel Escobar, *En Busca de Cristo en la América Latina* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Kairos, 2012).

⁷ Clawson, 'Misión Integral and Progressive Evangelicalism', p. 792.

⁸ David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in the Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1991), p. 383; Al Tizon, 'Precursors and Tensions in Holistic Mission: An Historical Overview', in *Holistic Mission: God's Plan for God's People*, ed. by Brian Woolnough and Wonsuk Ma, Regnum Edinburgh 2010 series (Oxford: Regnum, 2010), pp. 61–76 (p.63); Tito Paredes, 'Holistic Mission in Latin America', in *Holistic Mission*, ed. by Woolnough and Ma, pp. 102–118 (pp. 110–111) and Eliseo Vilchez-Blancas, 'Signos y Condiciones de un Nuevo Contexto Misiológico', *Integralidad* 4 (2008), 27–32 (p. 29).

⁹ Clawson, 'Misión Integral and Progressive Evangelicalism', p. 791.

Ecclesial Communities and liberation theology. During this period evangelical university students were exposed to Marxist ideas and turned to their Christian unions for help. Many of the leaders of the FTL, such as Padilla and Escobar, were heavily involved in campus ministry, through the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (IFES), and the FTL became a hub to articulate a theological and missiological response to these changing circumstances, based on the centrality of the concept of the Kingdom of God and a critical engagement with social sciences.¹⁰

The Lausanne Congress for World Evangelisation held in 1974 in the eponymous Swiss city is widely regarded as a watershed in evangelical attitudes to social involvement. While many North American and European missiologists expected the Lausanne Congress to have a focus on proclamation, Escobar, Padilla, and others were instrumental in bringing the issue of social involvement to the heart of the Lausanne Covenant, which emerged from the congress.¹¹ While there are debates concerning the significance of integral mission for the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelisation (LCWE),¹² from a Latin American perspective the LCWE is of much less importance than the 1974 Covenant, which is the source of inspiration and legitimation for many ventures in integral mission.¹³

In the first decade of the twenty-first century the proliferation of projects in South America bringing social action and evangelism together seemed to confirm the statement by one missiologist that 'today the issue of social action or evangelism among evangelicals is largely a historical footnote'.¹⁴ Many denominations had some form of social engagement so that, on the whole, preaching about integral mission was no longer an apologetic task but a matter of inspiring congregations and providing biblical and theological foundations. This positive environment for integral mission

¹⁰ The history of the FTLA is discussed in Martín Ocana Flores, 'Poder Político: Desafío para la Misión Integral en América Latina', *Integralidad* 3 (2008), 19–29 (pp. 19–22). The emergence of an integral approach to mission is described in Milton Guerrero, 'El Pacto de Lausana (1974): Una Contextualización vista desde 2010', *Integralidad* 8 (2011), 5–14 (pp. 5–9); Tito Paredes, 'Hipótesis de Trabajo para Comprender la Misiología de la Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana', *Integralidad* 16 (2014), 5–12 (pp. 5–10) and Ulrike Sallandt, 'Ética Social: Más Allá de la Misión Integral' *Integralidad* 3 (2007), 14–19 (p. 15).

¹¹ Tizon, 'Precursors and Tensions in Holistic Mission', pp. 64–65; Brian Woolnough, 'Good News for the Poor: Setting the Scene', in *Holistic Mission*, ed. by Woolnough and Ma, pp. 3–16 (pp. 3–4); Bryant Myers, 'Holistic Mission: New Frontiers', in *Holistic Mission*, ed. by Woolnough and Ma, pp. 119–127 (p. 119) and Vinay Samuel, 'Mission as Transformation and the Church' in *Holistic Mission*, ed. by Woolnough and Ma, pp. 128–136 (p. 128).

¹² Critics suggest that under pressure from Northern American missiologists, the Committee regressed to a narrower understanding of mission, maintaining a dualistic opposition between social action and evangelism. Tizon, 'Precursors and Tensions in Holistic Mission', pp. 67–69.

¹³ The support of John Stott for integral mission is a significant aspect in this legitimation. The importance of the friendship between Stott and Padilla is discussed in David C. Kirkpatrick, 'C. René Padilla and the Origins of Integral Mission in Post-War Latin America', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 67.2 (2016), 351–371.

¹⁴ Myers, 'Holistic Mission', p. 120.

is evidenced in Brazil by the formation of a national evangelical social action network, *RENAS*, in 2006, which included many evangelical organisations and churches from diverse theological traditions such as Lutherans, Baptists, and the Assemblies of God. Nonetheless, many denominations, especially among newer Pentecostal churches, did not join *RENAS*.¹⁵

The apparent success of integral mission, and its contemporary challenges, are in many ways tied to the Brazilian social and political context and its impact on the whole continent. In Brazil, many advocates of integral mission were also members of the *Movimento Evangélico Progressista* (Progressive Evangelical Movement-MEP) and celebrated the victory of the former metal worker and union leader Luis Inácio ‘Lula’ da Silva of the *Partido dos Trabalhadores* (Workers’ Party-PT) in the 2002 presidential elections. While in previous elections the PT’s roots in progressive Catholicism led to a neglect of evangelical voters, in 2002 the party proactively engaged with evangelicals and Lula’s first cabinet included two women from the Assemblies of God, Benedita da Silva, a former governor of Rio de Janeiro and the internationally known environmentalist Marina da Silva.¹⁶

Lula enjoyed unprecedented levels of popularity during his two terms as president between 2003 and 2010. A commodities boom, fuelled by the Chinese economy, meant that while much of the world faced a serious recession, South American economies continued to grow. This in turn financed the expansion of welfare programmes in Brazil, especially the *Bolsa Familia* and the *Bolsa Escola*, which gave families cash payments while their children remained in school. As a result, millions exited absolute poverty, leading to claims that there were more middle-class Brazilians than those living in poverty.¹⁷ The discovery of large oil reserves off the Southeast coast of Brazil, and the fact that the nation’s Gross Domestic Product was fifth in the world, overtaking the United Kingdom, suggested that the nation was ready to exercise international leadership. In South America Lula’s administration was surrounded by sympathetic left-wing regimes in Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador, Chile, and Argentina. In many of these countries Brazilian companies, such as Odebrecht, earned contracts for expensive public construction works. For many among the Latin American

¹⁵ RENAS, ‘Histórico’, *RENAS Rede Evangélica de Ação Social* <<http://renas.org.br/historico/>> [accessed 23 April 2018]

¹⁶ The PT’s reluctance to engage with evangelical voters in previous elections is discussed in Paul Freston, *Evangelicals and Politics in Asia, Africa and Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 30–34.

¹⁷ See, for example, Gary Duffy, ‘Brazil sees Middle Class Emerging’, *BBC News* <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/6993546.stm>> [accessed 12 December 2009] and The Economist, ‘Half the Nation, a Hundred Million Citizens Strong’, *The Economist* <http://www.economist.com/world/americas/displaystory.cfm?story_id=12208726> [accessed 12 December 2009]

left, including advocates of integral mission, this economic growth amid a global recession was evidence of the superiority of state driven capitalism over liberal capitalism.¹⁸

The good times did not last long. As Chinese demand for South American commodities retracted, many economies entered recession. As Brazil faced its worst economic crisis in recent decades and corruption scandals afflicted the PT, Lula's hand-picked successor, Dilma Rousseff, faced controversial impeachment proceedings shortly into her second term of office. As the nation became increasingly polarised, advocates of integral mission, who overall had supported the PT administration, especially its income redistribution policies, found themselves subjected to strident criticism. A key watershed came when three Presbyterian scholars, Augusto Nicodemos Lopes, Fabio Costa, and Jonas Madureira engaged in a discussion and critique of integral mission on the Mackenzie University YouTube channel.¹⁹ The fall-out from this controversy led Jorge Barro, founder of the Faculdade Teologica Sul Americana in Londrina to complain that it 'has become fashionable to attack integral mission in Brazil'.²⁰ This might have remained confined to the Brazilian context, especially considering the linguistic and cultural differences between Brazil and the rest of the continent, had it not been for the continent-wide aftermath of the Car Wash Investigation and the scandals involving the Brazilian construction company Odebrecht.

The Car Wash Earthquake and The Odebrecht Tsunami

The Car Wash Investigation initially sought to investigate financial transactions between companies doing business with Petrobrás, the Brazilian state-owned oil company. What emerged was an unprecedented scheme of bribes and kickbacks, which involved payments to the PT and other members of the governing coalition. Executives at Petrobrás and other companies negotiated plea bargains which reduced their prison sentences in exchange for information implicating politicians. Lula is currently in jail, appealing against a condemnation for corruption,²¹ as is Eduardo Cunha, a former

¹⁸ Sergio Fausto, 'The Lengthy Brazilian Crisis is not yet over', *Rice University's Baker Institute for Public Policy Issue Brief*, 02.17.17, (p. 2).

¹⁹ Augusto Nicodemos Lopes, Jonas Madureira, Fabio Costa, 'Academia em Debate 37: Teologia da Missão Integral', available online at <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ng257P3XXOc>> [accessed 05 November 2015]

²⁰ Quoted in Sandro Baggio, 'Teologia da Missão Integral em Debate' <<https://archive.fo/5xTS3>> [accessed 02 February 2018]

²¹ Lula faces five charges of corruption and has been condemned to a twelve-year prison sentence for receiving a bribe in the form of an apartment from construction company OAS. In April 2018 the Supreme Court controversially ruled, by six votes to five, that Lula had to start his prison term before his appeals against the ruling were exhausted.

president of the Congress with ties to the Assemblies of God. Some Brazilians regard the judge presiding the Car Wash Investigation, Sérgio Moro, as a national hero; others consider him part of a right-wing conspiracy to reverse the social gains of Lula's administration.²²

If the Car Wash investigation shook Brazilian politics, the practices of the construction company Odebrecht engulfed nearly all South America in a corruption scandal. Leveraging Brazil's influence, and the PT's contact with ideologically sympathetic governments, Odebrecht had a separate, clandestine department, the Division of Structured Operations, for arranging bribes and kickbacks for public officials in different countries and for laundering the money involved.

The fallout has shaken various countries, not least due to Odebrecht's practice of paying bribes across the political spectrum. For example, in Peru, Pedro Pablo Kuczynski was forced to resign as president, due to a scandal involving his ties to Odebrecht. His predecessor, Ollanta Humalla, has been arrested; there is a warrant for the arrest of former president, Alejandro Toledo, who resides in the United States; and there are investigations into connections between Odebrecht and the main leader of the opposition, Keiko Fujimori, and another former president, Alan García.²³

The pendulum has swung away from the trend towards moderate left-wing regimes in South America, a context in which integral mission thrived in the first decade of the century. Dilma Rousseff was replaced by her vice-President, Michel Temer, who has sought to reverse many of the PT's policies. Right-wing governments have returned to Ecuador, Chile, and Argentina, while the governments of Evo Morales in Bolivia and Nicolas Maduro in Venezuela have become increasingly authoritarian, in the latter case leading to an economic and humanitarian disaster.

Advocates of integral mission have not provided an effective response to these changing circumstances. There has been a tendency to downplay the scale of the corruption scandals and the economic challenges many countries are facing. For example, Padilla attributes these changes to media outlets promoting a 'conservative mentality and reactionary political thought' to achieve the impeachment of Dilma in Brazil, the return of neoliberalism with the election of the new national government in Argentina ... and attempts to

²² The details of the corruption scheme are described in Monica Arruda de Almeida and Bruce Zagaris, 'Political Capture in the Petrobras Corruption Scandal: The Sad Tale of an Oil Giant', *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs*, 39.2 (2015), 87-99 (p. 89). The operation itself was named after a car wash used to launder money. Dilma Rousseff's impeachment itself, however, was not linked to the corruption probe, but based on claims that she manipulated the federal budget in the run up to the 2010 election to hide the extent of the government deficit.

²³ The workings of the Odebrecht scheme and the countries involved are described in BBC News, 'Odebrecht Case: Politicians Worldwide Suspected in Bribery Scandal', *BBC News* <<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-41109132>> [accessed 01 February 2018]

destabilize other progressive democracies such as those in Venezuela, Ecuador and Bolivia.²⁴ Similarly, in Brazil, Baptist minister Ariovaldo Ramos interprets recent events as a 'coup' and seeks to organise evangelicals campaigning for Lula's release.²⁵

A better approach is to recognise that the social, political, and economic reality of post-Odebrecht South America means that advocates of integral mission need to respond to significant challenges, beginning with the role of integral mission in the life of churches.

The Ecclesiological Challenge

In researching the legacy of the Catholic Base Ecclesial communities, Maria Domezi and David Lehmann independently arrived at the conclusion that they reflected the middle-class ethos of priests and scholars rather than the culture of the poor themselves.²⁶ A similar problem affects advocates of integral mission and local evangelical churches in South America. 'Integral mission arose from within the revolutionary Latin American university environment',²⁷ and the way in which its history is often told, in terms of successive theological conferences and consultations,²⁸ suggests that it is predominantly the perspective of a diffuse network of scholars, missiologists, seminaries, journals, and western-funded NGOs. Consequently, despite the local church being considered the primary agent of integral mission, overall only a small minority of churches have fully embraced integral mission in South America.

In part, this is because the fastest growing churches in South America are Pentecostal congregations. Although there are some Pentecostal advocates of integral mission, such as Dario Lopez in Peru, most Pentecostal pastors and leaders do not participate in the same academic and missiological networks as advocates of integral mission. The fact that many more recent

²⁴ C. René Padilla, 'Carta Abierta a Harold Segura', *Fundación Kairos* <<http://www.kairos.org.ar/blog/?p=997>> [accessed 01 February 2018]

²⁵ Ariovaldo Ramos, 'Os evangélicos descobriram o que Lula não conseguiu: para vencer é preciso mídia', *Brasil de Fato* <<https://www.brasildefato.com.br/2017/01/03/os-evangelicos-descobriram-o-que-lula-nao-conseguiu-para-vencer-e-preciso-midia/>> [accessed 23 April 2018]

²⁶ Maria Domezi, 'A Devoção nas CEBs: Entre o Catolicismo Tradicional Popular e a Teologia da Libertação' (unpublished doctoral thesis, São Paulo: Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo, 2006), p.15 and David Lehmann, 'Dissidence and Conformism in Religious Movements: What Difference, if any, Separates the Catholic Charismatic Renewal and Pentecostal Churches' <<http://www.davidlehmann.org/david-docs-pdf/Public/DisSidence%20AND%20CONFORMISM%20IN%20RELIGIOUS%20MOVEMENTS.pdf>> [accessed 12 November 2012] p. 2.

²⁷ Kirkpatrick, 'C. René Padilla and the Origins of Integral Mission in Post-War Latin America', p. 353.

²⁸ For example, C. René Padilla, 'Integral Mission and its Historical Development', in *Justice, Mercy and Humility*, ed. by Tim Chester (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2003), pp. 42–58. Hence, David Kirkpatrick's PhD thesis on Padilla focuses predominantly on his role in universities, seminaries, and global missiological networks. Kirkpatrick, 'C. René Padilla', pp. 144–198.

Pentecostal churches, referred to as Neo-Pentecostals, enthusiastically embrace prosperity theology and adopt aggressive models of spiritual warfare significantly reduces the possibilities of approximation with advocates of integral mission.

Consequently, even the aforementioned proliferation of social action projects may have exaggerated the apparent success of integral mission. For some churches, this did not emanate from a biblical theology of mission but was a form of patronage, to increase the church's clientele base as part of a wider political project. An example of this is the *Projeto Nordeste* (Northeast Project), an irrigation project in the Northeast of Brazil, of the Brazilian *Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus* (Universal Church of the Kingdom of God), which was used to raise the political profile of one of the church's main bishops, Marcelo Crivella, and propel him first to the Brazilian senate and then to the role of mayor of Rio de Janeiro.²⁹

Hence, in Post-Odebrecht South America the challenge to adequately engage with churches is as important as ever. Most Pentecostal churches are in deprived areas, led by poor pastors, and provide the poor — including women — with many opportunities for service.³⁰ They are, therefore, ideally situated for an integral approach to mission. Nonetheless, the track record of advocates of integral mission in engaging with these churches is not promising, especially as many identify primarily as members of seminaries, mission organisations, and NGOs rather than as members of local churches. Chris Sugden laments the way in which proponents are often very critical of churches and seek to impose their own development agenda, a process which David Bosch describes as making the church 'be constantly goaded into action, as though it has to prove itself, has to earn its credibility through its own imposing schemes and in this way secure salvation'.³¹ As very little theological work has been done to develop the insights of Padilla, Escobar, and others in the 1970s and 1980s, the consequence is that, especially at the level of grassroots NGOs, theology and mission have been replaced by a sociological pragmatism, which risks both underplaying the uniqueness of

²⁹ The significance of the *Projeto Nordeste* in launching Crivella's political career is discussed in A. Souza, *Igreja in Concert: Padres Cantores, Midia e Marketing* (São Paulo: Annablume, 2005), p. 89 and M. Machado, *Política e Religião: A Participação dos Evangélicos nas Eleições* (Rio de Janeiro: Fundação Getúlio Vargas, 2006), pp. 72–73.

³⁰ Daniel Clark, 'Outward Mission or Serving a Ghetto: An investigation of the Missiological Impact of Brazilian Churches in West London' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Wales, 2013), pp. 44–49 and Maria Machado, 'Representações e Relações de Gênero nos Grupos Pentecostais', *Estudos Feministas* 13.2 (2005), 387–396 (p. 391).

³¹ Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 387 and Chris Sugden, 'Mission as Transformation: Its Journey among Evangelicals since Lausanne I', in *Holistic Mission*, ed. by Woolnough and Ma, pp. 31–36 (p. 35).

Christ and being taken over by a secular development agenda, further alienating local churches.³²

The Teleological Challenge

The difficulty that advocates of integral mission face in engaging with churches is compounded by a lack of clarity on what precisely churches should be aiming for. Churches are criticised for focusing on local level assistance and encouraged to engage with the structural causes of poverty and injustice, with little indication of what this engagement entails or the expected result that should be aimed for. Integral mission thus suffers from what Scot McKnight calls a lack of 'an explicit teleology'. By this term he means 'What will happen if they "win" the influence?'³³ Arguably, in South America there was little expectation that any influence would be achieved, so that when left-wing administrations came into power, supported by many advocates of integral mission, the lack of a clear goal became evident.

Guilherme Carvalho suggests that a focus on missiological praxis and a desire to keep those from different theological backgrounds together is responsible for this lack of clarity regarding the objectives of integral mission. Consequently, beyond an emphasis on greater involvement of lay members in the mission of the church, there is no 'ecclesiological model able to accurately explain the relationship between the local church, institutions and non-ecclesial Christian actions with society as a whole'.³⁴ This weak ecclesiology stems in part from the fact that, despite the kingdom of God being a central category in integral mission, there are different understandings of the kingdom and its relationship with contemporary society and politics.³⁵

Critics claim that the lack of a theologically-based teleology leaves integral mission vulnerable to being overly dominated by social scientific perspectives, especially Marxist ideology.³⁶ However, this critique often takes the form of guilt by citation, for quoting a Marxist, or guilt by vocabulary, for using a term developed by a Marxist. Although Orlando Costas accepted the role of Marxist analysis, this was rejected by Samuel

³² See Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 398 and Sugden, 'Mission as Transformation', p. 35. The lack of theological work is lamented in Myers, 'Holistic Mission', p. 121.

³³ S. McKnight, 'Evangelical Progressives: A Public Theology of Community' <<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/jesuscreed/2015/11/04/evangelical-progressives-a-public-theology-of-community>> [accessed 06 November 2015]

³⁴ Guilherme Carvalho, 'A Missão Integral na Encruzilhada: Reconsiderando a Tensão no Pensamento Teológico de Lausanne', in *Fé Cristã e Cultura Contemporânea*, ed. by Leonardo Ramos, Marcel Camargo and Rodolfo Amorim (Viçosa: Ultimato, 2009), p. 34.

³⁵ Carvalho, 'A Missão Integral na Encruzilhada', p. 43. Carvalho himself singles out three competing models of the relationship between the kingdom and the world: Calvinist, Lutheran, and Anabaptist.

³⁶ Lopes et al., 'Academia em Debate'.

Escobar and the prevailing position among advocates of integral mission such as Padilla, Tito Paredes, and Robinson Cavalcanti is to seek a critical use of the social sciences.³⁷ Nonetheless, integral mission in South America has been characterised by a vague, narrow focus on statist solutions to structural problems, through the transfer of resources by taxation, and a lack of a positive role for markets in human development. This reflects an anti-market approach in many sectors of South American social sciences, especially in the sociology of religion, where market metaphors abound which are pejorative in nature.³⁸ Hence, integral mission has tended to be the domain of those who are politically on the left, and thus becomes vulnerable to rejection at a time when left-wing administrations are experiencing record levels of unpopularity.

South American proponents of integral mission tend to be more comfortable playing the role of Jeremiah, bravely denouncing the injustices of the system, than that of Joseph, Obadiah, Nehemiah, and Daniel who needed to work within existing structures. This outsider perspective results in a lack of clarity regarding what one should do if one has the means to bring about change. In post-Odebrecht South America, clear, competing visions are being articulated, based upon business-friendly policies, the scaling back of state welfare support, the repeal of environmental legislation and laws protecting indigenous land rights, and the violent repression of crime, often articulated as an expression of Christian principles.³⁹ While this may allow some to return to their preferred prophetic role, it raises questions regarding the potential of integral mission to shape the mission of South American churches.

The Challenge of Violence and Polarisation

Urban violence, in which young, poor males are both the main perpetrators and victims, is a major issue in South American cities, which regularly appear on lists of highest homicide rates.⁴⁰ The climate of fear and insecurity

³⁷ Paredes, ‘Hipótesis de trabajo’, p. 10. The debate between Costas and Escobar is described in Kirkpatrick, ‘C. René Padilla and the Origins of Integral Mission in Post-War Latin America’, p. 187. While Jose Miguéz Bonino embraced revolutionary socialism, it is arguably more accurate to consider him a representative of liberation theology with close ties to advocates of integral mission. See Flores, ‘Poder político’, pp. 21–22.

³⁸ See Clark, ‘Outward Mission or Serving a Ghetto’, pp. 44–49 and Berenice Martin, ‘Pentecostal Conversion and the Limits of the Market Metaphor’, *Exchange* 35.1 (2006), 61–91 (p. 67). For an example of such a pejorative use of market imagery see Nancy Pereira, ‘Empire and Religion: Gospel, Ecumenism and Prophecy for the 21st Century’, *The Ecumenical Review* 58.1 (2006), 92–98 (p. 94).

³⁹ See for example Franklin Ferreira, ‘Uma Agenda para o Voto Conciente’, *Teologia Brasileira* <<http://www.teologiabrasileira.com.br/teologiadet.asp?codigo=402>> [accessed 01 February 2018]

⁴⁰ For example, Tristen Clavel, ‘Latin America Dominates World’s 50 Deadliest Cities Ranking’, *Insight Crime* <<https://www.insightcrime.org/news/brief/latin-america-dominates-world-50-deadliest-cities/>> [accessed 01 February 2018]

leads to the popularity of repressive measures against crime, including support for the return of the death penalty, the use of torture, police violence against suspects, and stricter prisoner sentences, despite the fact that most South American prisons are over-crowded and dominated by criminal gangs. The fact that many advocates of integral mission emphasise the long-term structural causes of crime, the need to respect legal rights, and humane prison conditions leads to the unfair accusation that they are more interested in the human rights of the perpetrators of crime than of the victims.⁴¹

The difficulty in presenting a moderate perspective on crime is symptomatic of the wider polarisation in South American societies. A key issue is that of same-sex marriage and gender identity. For many on the South American left the defence of same-sex marriage and fluid gender identities has become an axiomatic position. The educational system is thus perceived as a key medium to change social attitudes regarding gender. This has led to an alliance between evangelicals, Catholics, and right-wing politicians to counter what they perceive as a 'gender ideology' threatening family life and social stability. In Brazil, Assemblies of God pastors Silas Malafaia and Marcos Feliciano, a member of Congress, successfully led the campaign against same-sex marriage, while in Peru, the #conmishijosnosimetas (#don't mess with my children) movement successfully galvanised opposition to obstruct proposed government changes to the school curriculum, claiming the scalp of the Education minister in the process. As the hashtag indicates, the movement made extensive use of social media, distributing materials produced in Colombia and other countries against 'gender ideology'.

As political discourse becomes polarised, the possibility of being politically progressive on economic issues, but still defending a more historically Christian perspective on marriage, becomes curtailed. With many evangelicals equating concern for social justice with advocacy of 'gender ideology', the challenge of interacting with churches becomes even greater.

The Legacy Challenge

The challenges of post-Odebrecht South America come at a time when many of the pioneers in articulating the concept of integral mission are reaching the end of their careers. The polarisation of South American societies means that advocates of integral mission and their critics inhabit different academic,

⁴¹ The way in which security and crime issues are becoming the Achilles heel of integral mission mirrors what happened with Liberation theology as discussed in Clark, 'Outward Mission or Serving a Ghetto', p. 43 and Paul Freston, 'Researching the Heartland of Pentecostalism: Latin Americans at Home and Abroad', *Fieldwork in Religion* 3.2 (2008), 122–144 (p. 131).

ecclesial, and missiological networks. This leads to an insularity among some advocates of integral mission who fail to deal with the substance of critiques and often resort to angry, *ad hominem* attacks. Thus, critics are often simply dismissed as being under North-American influence, or, according to Ariovaldo Ramos, being motivated by ignorance, self-interest, intellectual dishonesty, lack of academic rigour, and prejudice.⁴²

This insularity and lack of engagement with critics raises the issue of the legacy of integral mission; that is, will there be a new generation of theologians, missiologists, and biblical scholars to carry on the work of Padilla, Escobar, and others? The answer is uncertain, as there are plenty of alternatives in South America for young Christian leaders, such as prosperity theology and various church growth strategies. Nonetheless, among seminary and university students, from where integral mission has traditionally recruited, what has become known as the ‘New Calvinism’ is the main alternative. Popularised by the Gospel Coalition and John Piper’s Desiring God ministry it presents complementarian gender roles, pro-market policies, and restrictions on the role of the state as the only biblically faithful and theologically sound approach. With articles and videos freely available on the internet in Spanish and Portuguese, university students are more likely to read materials by authors influenced by Abraham Kuyper than Padilla or Escobar. Although it is possible to reconcile Kuyper and integral mission,⁴³ his concept of sphere sovereignty is often presented to suggest that social justice is a concern which falls out of the domain of the church’s mission. For example, for Brazilian theologian Franklin Ferreira there is no other role for the church beyond worshipping God, proclaiming the gospel, and administering the sacraments; the quest for social justice being the responsibility of Christians operating in other spheres.⁴⁴

Tentative Steps Forward

It is hard to suggest more than a few tentative steps forward, given the complexity of the challenges faced by an integral approach to mission in post-Odebrecht South America. Rather the way ahead may be for a humbler and chastened form of integral mission to emerge. This involves recognising that, while definite gains were made in reducing poverty in the first decade

⁴² Baggio, ‘Teologia da Missão Integral em Debate’.

⁴³ See Paul Freston and Raphael Freston, ‘A tao Famigerada Missao Integral’, *Ultimato*, 362 (2016), 66–76.

⁴⁴ For example, see Franklin Ferreira, *Curso Vida Nova de teologia básica: Teologia sistemática* (São Paulo: Vida Nova, 2013), pp. 212–218 and Franklin Ferreira, ‘Crentes no poder’, *Revista Expressão - Cidadania Cristã*, 1 (2002), 85–90, 18 jan. 2002. More radical is the claim by another new Calvinist theologian Jonas Madureira that social action is little more than a ‘decorative trinket’ for the gospel, in Lopes et al., ‘Academia em Debate’.

of this century, this legacy has been tainted by corruption scandals and economic mismanagement. This humility involves, as Bosch indicates, rejecting the heresy that Christians can bring about salvation through their own works and remaining critical of 'all current human theories of human self-redemption'.⁴⁵ A chastened integral approach to mission abandons the shrill, self-righteous tone with which criticism has often been answered. It also rejects regarding critics of integral mission as enemies of the Kingdom, recognising

that when we claim the seriousness of the structures we build, they easily become oppressive ... we think we know who the enemies of the Kingdom are, but too often we are the enemy.⁴⁶

This humbler approach to integral mission should be more ideologically diverse. Traditionally, integral mission has been the preserve of the minority of evangelicals in South America who are politically progressive. Yet, the polarised context of many post-Odebrecht South American societies requires a broad coalition of churches, with individuals of different political persuasions committed to witnessing to the Kingdom in word and deed. This ideological diversity needs to be reflected in a greater ability to contextualise the advocacy for integral approaches to mission in forms which are compatible with the vocabulary and liturgy of the Pentecostal churches attended by many of the poorer members of South American societies.

A humbler approach to integral mission should be market friendly, but not market driven. The minimalist state proposed by some neo-Calvinists, which focuses basically on law and order, is unlikely to redress the multiple historical injustices that prevail in South America. Likewise, the statist, redistributionist model, suspicious of the market, which is preferred by many progressive evangelicals, is unlikely to foster the creativity necessary to promote economic growth, whilst encouraging corruption and nepotism in an increasingly larger and indebted state, as has occurred in Brazil. A market friendly approach requires widening the inter-disciplinary dialogue partners of those theologians and missiologists who support integral mission. Until now, the main dialogue partners have been social scientists, yet the dialogue pool needs to be widened to include the expertise of economists and business leaders.

⁴⁵ Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, p. 400.

⁴⁶ Jonathan Ingleby, 'Introduction', in *Carnival Kingdom*, ed by Marijke Hoek, Jonathan Ingleby, Andy Kingston-Smith and Carol Kingston-Smith (Gloucester: Wide Margin, 2013), pp. xiii-xv, (p. xv).

Conclusion

The immediate prognosis for integral mission in South America is not favourable. There is the unfair perception that it is the domain of left-wing academics, ecclesial outsiders who support the regimes responsible for the corruption scandals and economic difficulties in South America and are allies of those groups which would impose a 'gender ideology' upon South American societies. The popularity of the new Calvinism among many seminary and university students, which tends to exclude the concern for social action and social justice from the church's sphere, suggests the emergence of a new generation of leaders less congenial to the basic tenets of integral mission. Liberation theology stands as a cautionary tale that it is possible for concepts born in South America to achieve popularity in global academic and missiological circles, while declining in the continent itself. Yet the following words of Tito Paredes serve as a timely reminder of the need to find contextual forms of expressing the mission of the church in ways which follow Christ's example of witnessing to the Kingdom in both word and deed:

What is the role of faith when a young person must leave university because they cannot afford to pay the fees despite working full time? How does one relate faith with the diversity of expressions of family that have emerged including single mothers (there are also a few single fathers) many abandoned by their husbands, and families separated as one of the partners has migrated to another city or country seeking employment? How does one relate faith with the demands of workers and indigenous peoples for more dignified work and treatment? What is the role of Christians when faced with protest marches caused by abuses by mining companies or harsh bosses?⁴⁷

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⁴⁷ Tito Paredes, 'Reflexiones sobre los Desafíos y Oportunidades de Misión para las Iglesias Evangélicas-Pentecostales Latinoamericanas', *Integralidad* 4 (2008), 7–14 (p. 9).

Book Reviews

Robert L. Gallagher and Paul Hertig (eds), *Contemporary Mission Theology: Engaging the Nations* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2017), 307 pages. ISBN: 978-1626982116.

This book is a collection of essays written in honour of one of the leading and most influential of contemporary missiologists, Charles ‘Chuck’ Van Engen, now Emeritus Professor at Fuller Theology Seminary. It offers what Van Engen himself, in a concluding essay, rightly calls ‘a snapshot of thinking about M[ission] T[heology]’ (p. 289). With twenty-eight different contributions from a wide range of renowned missiologists from varied denominational and geographical backgrounds, it is hard to summarise the content of the book. But this very variety does at least give solid foundations to the claim made in the book’s title and sub-title. It seeks to look at contemporary mission theology, to which Van Engen has contributed so much through his writing and teaching, in the light of the engagement of all with all, mission, in the words of Samuel Escobar and others, from everywhere to everyone.

After an introduction and two essays that offer overviews of the field, there are eight parts, each with three essays (a nice Trinitarian touch to remind us of the centrality of the *missio Dei*, God’s own mission to God’s own creation). The parts are respectively Mission Theology and the Bible, Mission Theology and Church Beliefs, Mission Theology in Context, Mission Theology and the Church, Mission Theology and Church History, Mission Theology and Religious Pluralism, Modernity and Postmodernity in Mission Theology, Mission Theology and Ministry Formation. The book ends with Van Engen’s reflections on the way forward for mission theology.

The wide range means that not every chapter will be of equal interest for every reader, but on the other hand I am sure that everyone who is interested in mission theology will find a way in through one or other of the chapters. Certainly I have found in each of the chapters something to benefit from, and there is a uniformly high standard throughout, which is a tribute to the authors themselves and to Van Engen. Every decade or so it is good for an academic discipline such as missiology to have an overview of the state of the discipline, the important questions and themes, and ways in which they are being approached. This book offers precisely such an overview and is to be warmly welcomed.

Reviewed by Tim Noble

Clemens Sedmak, *The Capacity to be Displaced: Resilience, Mission, and Inner Strength* (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 253 pages. ISBN: 978-9004341838.

Clemens Sedmak, Professor of Social Ethics at King's College London, sets out to explore resilience as it stems from the interior life, or what he terms 'epistemic resilience'. It is this resilience from within that gives the capacity to be displaced, through such experiences as illness, imprisonment or exile, as it is variously experienced by mission personnel, development workers, and refugees. He surveys the wider research on resilience, noting that there are social as well as personal sources of resilience, such as a sense of belonging, and that resilience is not simply a quality of the individual but a necessity for families, communities, businesses, and nation states. The writer's discussion of the centrality of a 'robust identity' for resilience, and what contributes to such an identity, has applicability for the individual, but also for these other social institutions.

Professor Sedmak's concern, though, is with the inner world of the individual – the commitments, concerns, and coherent narrative of the self which are a person's inner resources and enable 'the active process of self-righting' (p. 54) in situations and states of displacement. The author examines the inner life from a scriptural basis and from within the Christian tradition through engagement with an eclectic range of Christian patriarchs and mystics. He then devotes his concluding chapters to in-depth explorations of thinking and memory, faith and existential commitments, as well as hope and love. These are the elements of epistemic resilience for Sedmak, that enable a person to integrate experience with memory and knowledge to form an inner world that can thrive when the outer world is in disarray.

This is in no way a self-help book, and those looking for immediate fixes for resilience may be disappointed. It is also, in the main, descriptive and may leave the reader able to appreciate the qualities of inner resilience, but unsure how to cultivate them. The real strength of this book is the numerous case studies it contains of people who have demonstrated epistemic resilience in extreme circumstances. These often beautifully written vignettes give flesh to Professor Sedmak's academic arguments, rendering them compelling and attractive. Most of the author's exemplars are, though, heroic in terms of what and how they endured and this, too, may make them inaccessible to ordinary people living through experiences of displacement.

Reviewed by Mark Ord

Melanie E. Trexler, *Evangelizing Lebanon: Baptists, Missions, and the Question of Cultures* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2016), 276 pages. ISBN: 978-1481302593.

‘Missionaries are vehicles of cultural and political imperialism!’ or so goes the claim. Trexler’s *Evangelizing Lebanon* provides a thoughtful, nuanced account of the twentieth-century interaction between Baptist missionaries from the USA and Lebanese Baptists that overturns simplistic understandings of that encounter. Drawing on her doctoral research in Baptist archives and collections in the USA and Lebanon, as well as on interviews with former missionaries and Lebanese Baptists, Trexler discovers a complex relationship between the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) missionaries and Lebanese Baptists. She argues that the encounter transformed both Lebanese Baptists’ and SBC missionaries’ understanding and practice of mission and evangelisation.

Trexler traces the early, ‘indigenous’ emergence of Baptists in Lebanon from Said Jureidini, an Arabic-speaking Greek Orthodox who experienced an evangelical conversion during his visit to the Chicago World’s Fair in 1893. She identifies Landmarkism as the Baptist ideology Jureidini received and adapted to the culture of Beirut and surrounding villages. This ideology would come to underpin the encounter between Lebanese Baptists and later missionaries. Following SBC missionaries’ relocation to Lebanon after the Palestinian Nakba (1948), conflict grew as mission policies and practice conflicted with Lebanese Baptist practices and convictions. Even so, through shared experience of suffering and survival during the Civil War (1975-1990), the remaining missionaries and Lebanese Baptists found a mutual respect and shared mission of presence that opened opportunities for evangelism. In the final period (1987-2011), Trexler traces rifts among Lebanese Baptists between those whose Landmarkism has become an ideological framework supporting autonomy and preservationism as Baptists and Lebanese, and others who have embraced an outward-facing, contextualised Baptist identity through interdependence, peacebuilding, and interfaith dialogue.

In the midst of anti-Muslim rhetoric still present among western Baptists and evangelicals, Trexler provides valuable perspectives on mission and evangelism from the century-long, mutually transforming encounter between Lebanese Baptists and SBC missionaries. If there is one weakness, it is the hints of generalisation in snapshots of present-day Lebanese Baptist responses to the Syrian crisis. While some congregations have responded with apathy or refusal to help, the present situation is highly dynamic. Praxis-based theologies of hospitality and plurality have emerged from some of those same congregations as lay members engage in caring for refugee

neighbours. Through no fault on her part, Trexler's research ends on the cusp of a dynamic new period that calls for further research in the coming years.

Evangelizing Lebanon contributes richly to understanding how encounters between foreign missionaries and local populations mutually transform all involved. Trexler's careful attention to a community that has become my family kept me riveted from cover to cover.

Reviewed by Caleb Hutcherson

Dean Flemming, *Why Mission?* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2015), 173 pages. ISBN: 978-146759369.

This is the fourth volume in the 'Reframing New Testament Theology' series and addresses the issue of approaching the New Testament Scriptures with a missional perspective. This is an outstanding little book with much to commend it. After a helpful Introduction, in which Flemming proposes the importance of reading the whole of the New Testament 'in light of the mission of God' (p.xv), the book's six chapters focus on the missional readings of Matthew, Luke and Acts, John, Philippians, I Peter, and Revelation. Flemming concludes with a short Epilogue, which encourages his readers to continue to study the New Testament with a missional viewpoint and apply the findings as we join with God in his mission to all people and nations.

The six main chapters are all excellent, so my main grievance with this book is that it is too short and does not cover the whole of the New Testament. While numerous principles can be extrapolated from the single Pauline Epistle documented, it would have been useful to have possibly a second or third example, such as the missional readings of either I or II Corinthians and I or II Thessalonians.

Nevertheless, the chapters are well presented, well written, and include many well thought through arguments and ideas. Flemming is adept at revealing that the texts he examines have a missional emphasis and are, therefore, useful for anyone thinking through the *missio dei* and the mission of the Church. Flemming helpfully includes aspects one needs to look for and critical questions one needs to ask.

Flemming's biblical comprehension (he is currently a professor of New Testament) and his mission experience (he worked for twenty-four years in both Asia and Europe) is evident and significant. Two personal highlights would be Luke-Acts' 'Boundary Breaking Mission' and 'Reading Philippians as Missional Communities'.

This would be a great book for church or mission leaders or, in fact, anyone with an interest in combining New Testament theology and

missiology. By the end of this book, Flemming has clearly demonstrated that 'mission is woven into the very fabric of the New Testament' (p.xx).

Reviewed by Phil Grasham

vanThanh Nguyen and John M. Prior (eds), *God's People on the Move: Biblical and Global Perspectives on Migration and Mission* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2014), 204 pages. ISBN: 978-1625640796.

Martha Frederiks and Dorottya Nagy (eds), *Religion, Migration and Identity: Methodological and Theological Explorations* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 192 pages. ISBN: 978-9004326149.

Migration, refugees, and displacement are politically charged topics that are very much part of the social discourse globally today. They have a direct impact on issues of national identity, discrimination, and social justice. It is reflected politically with the election of right wing, nationalist governments in many countries. The complexity of these issues is compounded by the fact that the Christian community in many countries is deeply divided when discussing immigration and refugees. These two books are timely contributions to the discussions within the larger Christian community.

Nguyen and Prior look at not only the biblical perspectives on migration in the Old and New Testaments, but they also examine the role of the Church and Christian institutions in contemporary issues in migration. Chris Wright has observed elsewhere that 'migration runs like a thread through the whole biblical narrative'. The biblical section in the book starts with the understanding of God's blessings being poured out through a migrant (Abraham) and migrants as missionaries (Priscilla and Aquila). There are lessons from history which look at Israel's ancestors as *gerim* or foreigners, as well as Paul and Barnabas at Lystra and the lessons for crossing boundaries and cultures in the context of ministry.

The contemporary issues section chooses particular issues from across the world to understand the role of the Church and the work of mission in each of these contexts. It explores the undocumented workers in the USA, the current trends in migration in Asia, and Francophone migrant churches in Pretoria, South Africa. More critically, it explores a missional theology in an urban culture of displacement and the issue of 'failed' migrant returns, interestingly, using the book of Ruth.

Religion, Migration and Identity, edited by Frederiks and Nagy, is a more academic collection of articles that first appeared in the journals *Exchange* and *Mission Studies*. The book explores a specific aspect of the

migration experience, that of identity and religion. The writers state that migrants ‘bring about changes in the religious landscape, in religious beliefs and practices, and in the way people understand themselves, each other, and the world around them’. With that in mind, Frederiks and Nagy introduce the topic with two chapters that explore the relationship of the conceptual, theoretical, theological, and missiological with migration. These provide the framework for the rest of the contributions. There are a wide range of case studies including refugee resettlement in the USA during the Cold War, Nigerian churches in the Czech Republic, migrant churches in Kuwait, and Arab churches in New Jersey. The last three chapters are theological reflections on migrants, identity, and missions.

The important contribution of both books is that they move beyond the basic facts that the migrants are foreigners and therefore should be shown hospitality by the host community. They tackle the theological understanding that God uses migrants for his purposes. Migrants are his tools for cross-cultural missions. Church historian Philip Jenkins has noted that migrants are an integral part of the revitalisation of European Christianity.

Frederiks and Nagy tackle the difficult topic of how religion, identity, and migration intersect. This discussion dovetails with the work of Walter Brueggemann, Craig Bartholomew, and John Inge on the importance of place and belonging, which is vital in determining identity. Migration and displacement destroy this sense of identity and there is a need to reconstruct a new identity in the places the migrants have settled, by integrating their old identity into new roots. Brueggemann writes that ‘it is rootlessness and not meaninglessness that characterize the current crisis. There can be no meaning apart from roots.’

The books individually lack breadth in addressing the migration phenomenon and the scope of the refugee crisis. Because of the displacements in the Middle East and the refugee flows into Europe, the conversation about migration and displacement has progressed significantly and the two books predate these discussions. But they are an important contribution to the overall discussion of who the foreigner is in our midst and our responsibility towards them.

Reviewed by Rupen Das

VYACHESLAV TSVIRINKO

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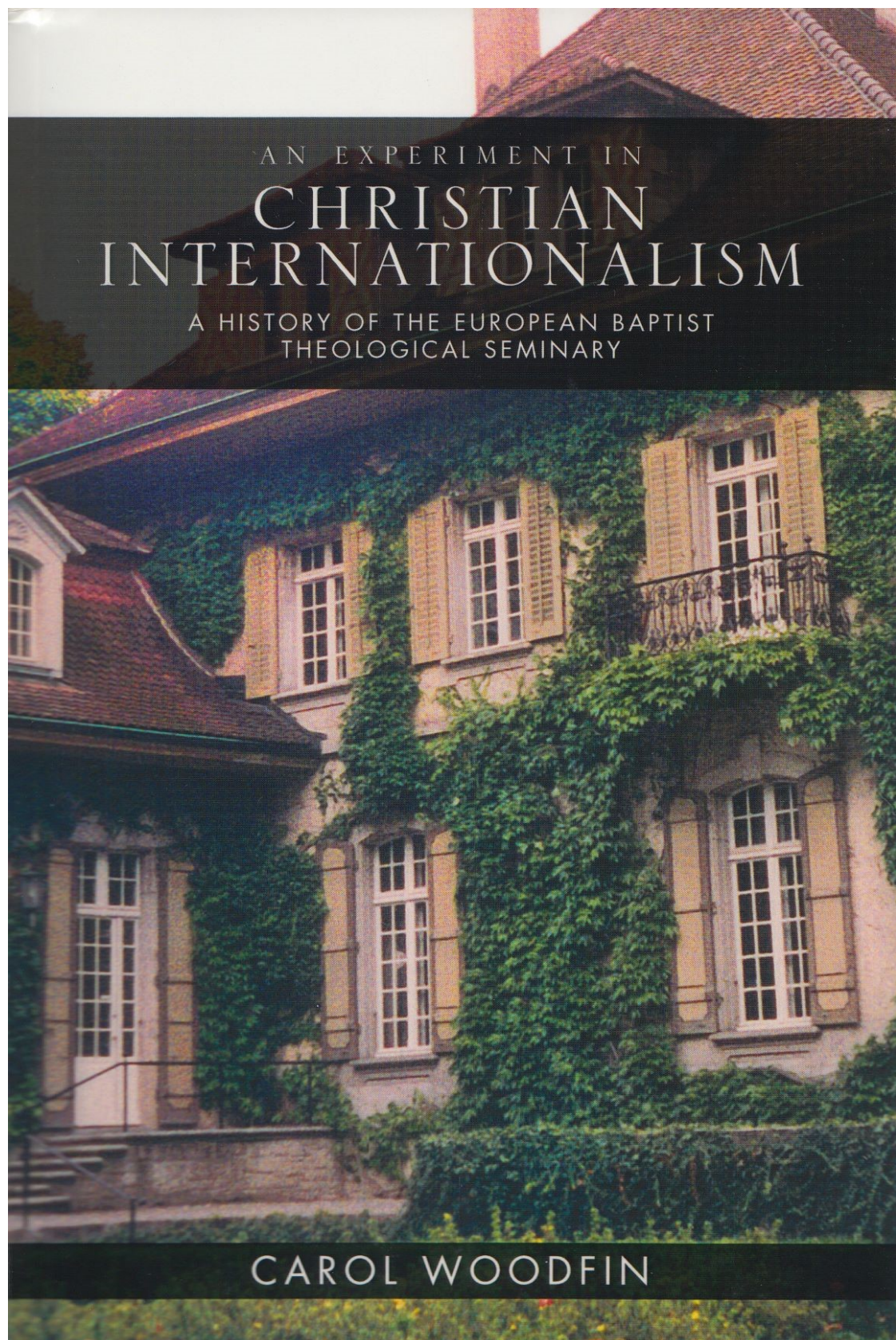
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